Draft

Governor Thompson State Park Master Plan

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
Bureau of Parks and Recreation

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Draft

Governor Thompson State Park Master Plan Teams

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CHAPTER ONE: Introduction and Executive Summary

The Year 2000 was celebrated as the 100th Anniversary of the creation of Wisconsin's State Park System. To commemorate this Centennial the Department of Natural Resources acquired 1,987 acres of land comprising Paust's Woods Lake Resort, plus about 200 acres of adjacent land fronting on Caldron Falls Reservoir from Wisconsin Public Service Corporation (WPS). Together, these two properties formed the core of the new Governor Thompson State Park. Woods Lake Resort was a popular family-oriented establishment that had been operated by the Paust family for three generations. The estimated 200-acre Caldron Falls Reservoir property acquired from WPS was part of land holdings associated with hydroelectric power generation at the Caldron Falls Dam on the Peshtigo River. An existing WPS boat landing (#13) was included in this acquisition. Since the establishment of Governor Thompson State Park three additional tracts of land have been purchased and added to the park. This brings the current park acreage to 2,415 acres.

Governor Thompson State Park (GTSP) is located in central Marinette County west of the Village of Crivitz, Wisconsin and about 60 miles north of Green Bay. The property is partiality located on the Caldron Falls Reservoir (with about .35 miles of shoreline) and is adjacent to the Peshtigo River State Forest. They share two sections of co-terminal boundary adjacent to Caldron Falls Reservoir - one area on the east and one on the west. See *Map A - Regional Location map* - for an overview.

Summary of proposed management, development, and use

The proposed master plan sets the pattern for overall management and development of the park. It is the product of public participation, parks program input, site resource data and Basin Partner input.

Governor Thompson State Park would be developed to provide opportunities for public recreation and education in a rustic, forested setting. The park and its resources would be managed to provide a broad range of ecological, cultural, social and economic benefits within its capabilities. The generally undeveloped and scenic character of the shorelines and forested uplands would provide the State Park an atmosphere of solitude, reflection and learning while promoting traditional state park recreational activities within the capabilities of the natural resources of the site. Both day-use activities and overnight camping would be provided.

Proposed development includes a modern 100-site campground, rustic walk-in campsites along Caldron Falls Reservoir, an indoor group camp, and an outdoor group camp. Over 20 miles of trails are proposed that would include hiking, cross county skiing, bicycling and snowmobiling. In addition, the existing boat landing would be improved to provide better access to the Reservoir. Two day-use areas would be developed, one at Woods

Lake and one at Huber Lake. The recreational facilities would include some modern conveniences, but the appearance of park structures and facilities would have an informal "Northwoods" style.

To provide for the long-term protection of key park resources and to allow for improved delivery of recreational opportunities, the master plan recommends an expansion of the Park boundary by about 1,520 acres of fee title land and/or easements. This would bring the proposed park boundary to 3,935 acres. It is also proposed that part of the Peshtigo River State Forest along the Reservoir adjacent to the Park be included within the State Park (see *Map B*). At the present time, this would become the only no-wake zone within the Governor Thompson State Park / Peshtigo River State Forest boundaries.

The Peshtigo River State Forest shares a boundary and many management and use issues with GTSP. A master plan will be developed for the Peshtigo River State Forest after resource inventories and other data assessments are completed. The draft goals have been prepared for the State Forest Plan. They call for closely integrated management of both properties, especially recreational opportunities, as a result the recreational options for park visitors will ultimately extend far beyond the park boundaries. For example, since the park does not have the space necessary to provide a high quality horse trail network, the state forest will be the primary provider of horse ridding opportunities, with some trails potentially extending into or through the park.

The park's vegetation would be managed to provide an appropriate balance among existing timber types, with some areas of pine barrens/oak barrens restored for educational purposes. Special emphasis would be placed on maximizing the health and vigor of the red oak stands growing on sandy soils to protect against pests like the gypsy moth and forest tent caterpillar. Long-lived trees, like white pine, would be encouraged as a forest component and, on good sites, managed for older, larger trees.

The planning of Governor Thompson State Park has generated much public interest, both local and statewide. Citizen participation is a strong component of state master planning as defined by administrative code NR 44. Numerous public meetings, open houses, newspaper articles and mailings have enabled the public to participate in this planning process. Newsletters, meeting announcements and progress reports were periodically sent to those on the over 1300-entry mailing list as well as posted on the DNR's master planning website. Chapter Six contains a more detailed summary and chronology of the public involvement component of the master planning effort.

In current dollars, it is estimated that development of the park will be $4.9 million, with an additional $3.04 million for added land acquisitions.

Park Resources

GTSP has approximately 40% uplands and 60% wetlands (See *Maps D and E*). The majority of the site is forested. The single most prevalent forest type (38%) is Aspen, some of which is on lowland or wet sites and some on higher ground. The other major forest type is Oak. Of the oaks, two-thirds is commonly known as scrub oak and one third is red oak. Most of the oak occurs on sandy dry sites. Swamp hardwoods, jack pine; swamp conifers cedar and red pine make up the balance of the forest types. A significant amount of younger white pine exists on the site, but as a minority component of other stands. A generalized vegetation map is attached to the master plan, showing the locations of the various timber stands.

Summary of EA

An Environmental Assessment has been prepared as a part of the draft master plan for Governor Thompson State Park. It addresses potential impacts of actions recommended by the master plan ranging from land acquisition and facility development to management and operation of the park. The Environmental Assessment concludes that the implementation of master plan would provide positive recreational, ecological, social, and economic benefits to the region. It further concludes that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process is not required.

CHAPTER TWO: Proposed Management, Development and Use

Designated property name: Governor Thompson State Park

Property designation: State Park

Statutory authority: Chapter 27, Wis. Stats.

Proposed acreage goal: 3,935 acres

Vision

Governor Thompson State Park provides opportunities for public recreation and education in a rustic, forested setting. The park and its resources are managed for present and future generations to provide a broad range of ecological, cultural, social and economic benefits within its capabilities. The generally undeveloped and scenic character of the shorelines and forested uplands provide the State Park an atmosphere of solitude, reflection and learning while promoting the continued tradition of a statewide system of parks and open spaces. The park provides the best possible service to park visitors and its partners.

Management Goals

1. Provide and maintain a variety of high quality native communities and habitats within the ecological capabilities of the site for public enjoyment, education and ecological benefits.

2. Identify and protect rare, threatened and endangered species and areas of geological, archaeological and cultural significance.

3. Manage shoreline zones for a natural appearance and the protection and enhancement of aquatic resources.

4. Provide a variety of seasonal and year-round camping opportunities in partnership with nearby public and private campgrounds.

5. Provide a range of seasonal and year-round non-motorized recreational opportunities that preserve the atmosphere of solitude, reflection and learning, in facilities ranging from primitive to comfortable rustic-styled modern.

6. Establish compatible, mutually supportive programs and infrastructure with the Peshtigo River State Forest and other partners for resource protection, education and recreation management.

7. Provide recreational access to Caldron Falls Reservoir, Woods Lake and Huber Lake.

8. Prevent or minimize conflict among different types of recreational uses and among various types of park uses and park management activities.

9. Acquire additional land for reasons of resource protection, critical development needs, access, boundary protection, boundary continuity, or protection from non-compatible uses.

10. Limit overall park development to no more than 15% of the total area.

11. Manage the deer herd on the property when necessary by controlled hunting methods.

Land Management Classifications

The park is divided into designated management zones according to the primary management or use focus for the area. Each management area is assigned a land management classification. The land management classifications are assigned according to Chapter NR 44.06 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code. They are shown on *Maps B and C*. Each area is discussed below.

Proposed Recreation Development and Management

Governor Thompson State Park would be developed to provide a wide variety of opportunities for public recreation and education in a rustic, forested setting. The recreational opportunities proposed for the park include camping (primitive to modern), day use activities like picnicking and fishing (easily accessible to remote), a variety of trails – including a network of paved bike paths, and a well developed nature interpretation/education program. The recreation plan offers access to two small, non-motorized lakes in the park as well as access to the Caldron Falls Reservoir. While many recreational facilities would include some modern conveniences, park facilities would have an informal "Northwoods" style.

The majority of the park, at least 85 percent, will be maintained in a relatively natural, undeveloped condition. Trails and other “dispersed”, lower density types of recreational uses would be found there. Campgrounds, picnic areas, play grounds and other intensive

use areas are clustered into specific locations. The approximate future location of all recreational facilities is shown on *Map B.*

The recreational opportunities to be provided and facility developments are discussed below according to the management zone in which it is located.

--Camping Zone--

Objectives:

1. Provide up to 110 camping sites for both rustic and modern styles of family camping, and separate rustic-style outdoor camping experiences for organized camping groups.
2. Provide an active exercise area for children in a natural appearing, safe setting in proximity to the family campground.
3. Provide a venue for interpretive programs along with regional entertainment acts for campers and other park visitors.

NR 44 Classification: Recreation – Type IV Setting

The primary facilities to be constructed within the Camping Zone are a modern family campground, rustic outdoor group camp, playground, and an amphitheater. They are detailed below. The main emphasis is on providing a safe, harmonious camping environment that ranges from year round rustic to modern facilities. See *Map B* for locations of the proposed campgrounds / campsites.

Oak View Modern Family Campground

It is proposed that a 100 unit modern campground be built near the northern edge of the property. The NR 44 Development Class of this campground is Type IV-Modern. The following developments are proposed for this site:

- One flush toilet/shower building;
- 6 vault toilets;
- RV dump station;
- Fish cleaning station near the RV dump station;
- 30 electrical sites would be grouped in a separate loop from non-electrified sites;
- Pressurized drinking water;
- Hand water pumps;
- ADA cabin for handicapped use, 1000 GSF in size that has all doors, slopes, and furnishings designed to comply with ADA standards. Running water, electricity, heat and air conditioning are standard features.
- One open area that would provide camping opportunities for persons traveling on foot or bicycle.

Playground Area
It is proposed that one adventure playground 60' x 60' be built next to the Oak View modern campground. The following facilities are proposed for this site:

- A 60' x 60' cleared area;
- Artificial, but natural appearing rock structures up to 7 feet tall with features for children to crawl and slide around on;
- Sandbox;
- Drinking water.

A portion of the play equipment and their base materials would accommodate children with disabilities in accordance with ADA requirements.

Outdoor Theater / Amphitheater
It is proposed that an outdoor theater / amphitheater be built near the Oak View modern campground. The following facilities are proposed for this site:

- Wooden stages of various sizes connected to form a total platform size of 20' x 40';
- Seating for up to 75 people;
- Vault toilets 2x2 design, one set;
- Lighting for night program entertainment;
- Parking lot - 30 spaces.

Northern Lights Outdoor Group Campground
An outdoor group camp area is proposed where several separate organized camping groups could be accommodated. It would consist of up to 5 sites (50-person total capacity) and would be created to the south of the main road near the family modern campground. NR 44 Development Class for the group campground is Type IV - modern camping. The following facilities are proposed:

- Hand pumped drinking water;
- Three sets of combined (2M+2W) vault toilets;
- Two electrical sites with one outlet at each site;
- Fire rings;
- Picnic tables.

--Woods Lake Day Use Zone--

The Woods Lake day use zone extends along the western shoreline of Woods Lake as shown in *Map B*.

Objectives:

1. Within the Woods Lake Day Use Area provide picnicking, general relaxation, non-motorized water access for fishing, sightseeing and nature study and similar day-use recreational opportunities for all park visitors.

2. Maintain and enhance a generally natural appearing shoreline, particularly the horizon line view of the day use area as seen from the lake.
3. Manage the fishery of Woods Lake for largemouth bass, northern pike and panfish. Monitor fish populations to determine if any regulations are warranted.

NR 44 Development Class: Type IV Setting – Rustic

The design capacity of this day use area would be 200 persons at maximum utilization, and the area would be ADA accessible. A natural appearing shoreline would be promoted within the area through the design of the facilities and use of native vegetation for screening and visual enhancement. Most development would be sited 75 feet or more away from the shoreline of Woods Lake. No motors of any type would be allowed on Woods Lake. The following facilities are proposed at this site:

- Access road – 1/8 Mile;
- Parking – 75 spaces;
- Shelter with electricity – 24'x 54' low pitch laminated;
- Vault toilets 2x2 design, one set;
- Drinking water supply – accessible drinking fountains (3);
- Interpretive kiosk / displays;
- Accessible fishing pier – 6'x 75';
- Drop-in lake access –remote parking, shore ledge.

--Caldron Falls Reservoir Shoreland Zone--

The Caldron Falls Reservoir Shoreland Zone extends along the shoreline of Caldron Falls as shown on *Map B.*

Objectives:

1. Provide access to Caldron Falls Reservoir for motorized and non-motorized boating, shore fishing, and viewing of the Reservoir.
2. Provide a primitive, remote camping experience to enjoy the scenic vistas and undeveloped shorelines of Caldron Falls Reservoir.
3. Provide for a quiet water experience for boaters and visitors on or near the Reservoir's bays within the park, and to protect the park shoreline from erosion from boat wakes.

Reservoir Access: It is proposed that improvements be made to the existing gravel pad boat launch on Caldron Falls. The following facilities are proposed for this site:

- 12' x 30' concrete boat launch;
- Cleared parking for 20 cars and trailers;
- 8' x 20' long wooden floating pier;
- 4' x 12' long wooden pier for accessible shore fishing and canoe / kayak launching;
- Vault toilets 2x2 design, one set;

A fish cleaning station, while related to the boat landing, would be located adjacent to the travel trailer sanitary station to take advantage of available electricity, water supply, and wastewater disposal facilities necessary to support a fish cleaning station.

Vista Points: Two scenic vista sites are proposed upon the shoreline of Caldron Falls Reservoir. These vistas would offer expansive views of the Reservoir.
The following facilities are proposed for each site:

- Wooden bench;
- Trail signage;
- Interpretive display.

Remote Camping: It is proposed that three walk-in, primitive, well-dispersed campsites would be developed proximal to the water's edge on Caldrons Falls Reservoir. The NR 44 Development Class setting would be Type III – Rustic, with no drinking water or electricity available at these sites. Campsites would be accessed only on foot on a primitive-to-lightly-developed trail.

The following developments would be provided for each campsite:

- Tent pad;
- Box toilet;
- Fire ring;
- Picnic table.

It is also recommended that the Peshtigo River State Forest Master plan consider placing more walk-in camping sites along Caldron Falls Reservoir that would connect to the Park via a network of trails.

--No-Wake Zone--

A no-wake zone is proposed along Caldron Falls Reservoir (see *Map B*). This would enhance "quiet water" non-motor boating in the near-park bays and reduce shoreline erosion. The no-wake zone would be entirely within the Governor Thompson State Park, with NR 45 authority to manage recreational boating within the designated area.

--Active Recreation Area Zone--

The Active Recreation Area Zone encompasses the majority of the park. It's primarily an area for dispersed recreation, such activities as hiking, biking or bird watching, and it does not have high intensity facility development and use, like the camping zone.

Objectives:

1. Provide for a variety of trail uses within the park, including biking, hiking, cross-country skiing, nature interpretation/education, and provide for a connector snowmobile route for the Ranch Road trail.
2. Provide a rustic-style indoor camping experience for organized camping groups.
3. Provide an opportunity to experience a vista or other scenic features such as Caldron Falls Reservoir from an elevated vantage point.

Trails

Trails are located through out the Park as shown on *Map B*.

Bike Trail

Objective: Provide opportunities for family biking on a non-road travel route that connects most developed facilities within the park.

NR 44 Trail Classification: Fully developed.
It is proposed to create approximately 5 miles of paved or crushed limestone bike trails that would act as a backbone to connect most facilities within the park. This bike trail would be a minimum of 8 feet wide and be separated from roads where possible. This bike trail would also provide entrance / exit points to Boat Landing 13 Road and Ranch Roads.

Nature Trail

Objective: Provide opportunities for nature interpretation / education programs with a ADA accessible trail.

NR 44 Trail Classification: Fully developed.
It is proposed to create approximately a 1/2 mile of nature trail from the nature center. This trail would go near Woods Lake in a looped fashion with interpretive displays and signage. This trail will be ADA accessible.

Hiking and Cross-Country Ski Trails

Objective: Provide opportunities for hiking and groomed cross-country ski recreation within a looped trail system.

NR 44 Trail Classification: Lightly developed.
It is proposed to create approximately 10.75 miles of hiking and cross-country ski trails. These would be maintained as lightly developed trails. Winter use would consist of groomed xc ski trails on 8 miles of trail. Where feasible, connections would be made to the State Forest that could increase the mileage of these trails. Two main trailheads would be established. The first would be at the Woods Lake parking area in which trail signs, maps and parking would be available. The second would be within the park at the terminus of the main road. This trailhead would have parking for up to 30-vehicles, a

hand pump well and pit toilets. A kiosk would be placed near the trailhead junction that would provide trails information.

Pass-Through Snowmobile Trail
Objective: Provide non-road passage for snowmobiles within the Park boundaries.

NR 44 Trail Classification: Lightly developed.
It is proposed that a one way pass-through snowmobile route would be established along the south boundary of the park. This trail would be a connector from Parkway Road to Caldron Falls Road. This connector trail would be approximately 2.75 miles long. (Stated later.) As lands are acquired along the south boundary of the park this trail could move to the new southern boundary, if feasible.

The specific alignment of such a trail would be determined on site by DNR staff and must be located to prevent conflicts with other winter uses. When a pass-through route is designated a land use agreement would be negotiated between the DNR and the organization responsible for the trail. Upon relocation of the trail from Ranch Road it is expected that use of the Ranch Road right-of-way as a snowmobile route would cease.

(Definition: A *pass-through snowmobile trail* provides passage through a property via a route that creates the least amount of disruption, the least amount of environmental impact, and causes the least possible amount of user conflict).

No ATV's would be allowed upon this trail, and the remainder of the property would be closed to motorized trail uses.

Equestrian Use

Because of the surrounding road networks and wetland areas (see *Map E*) within the Park, there is a need to look at a regional equestrian trail network to see how both the Peshtigo River State Forest, the Park and other properties can develop a equestrian trail network. Once the Peshtigo River State Forest master plan has been approved and if equestrian trails are proposed, the Department will revisit this plan for possible connections to this equestrian trail network from the Park.

The desired objective is to provide the public with the best possible facility for horse riding and camping. The design of the system will not be known until both master plans are done and approved. However, horse-riding opportunities are, and will be available immediately in the Peshtigo River State Forest.

North Woods Lake Indoor Group Campground

NR 44 Development Class: Type III camping facilities / buildings.
It is proposed that two buildings be placed on the Northwest edge of Woods Lake to provide indoor group camping. No electricity would be provided at either building. The following facilities are proposed:

- One building with a capacity of 12 persons;
- One building with a capacity of 16 persons;
- Hand-pumped drinking water;
- Vault toilets with small solar powered night-light;
- Heat from a code-compliant heating device;
- A gravel parking area - 14 spaces;
- Lightly developed gravel access road;
- Fire rings;
- 12' x 20' open shelter for cooking / group functions.

Scenic Overlook Tower
It is proposed that one scenic overlook tower be built on higher ground where a significant view would be possible. The following facilities are proposed for this site:

- Wooden observation tower up to 80' tall;
- A short walking path from the trailhead parking lot;
- Interpretive displays / signs on top of the tower.

--Huber Lake Day Use Zone--

Objectives:
1. Provide day use recreational opportunities for quiet, low-impact day-use recreational activities and solitude in a somewhat remote location with simple facilities.
2. Manage Huber Lake to provide a sustainable fishery. Investigate and monitor fish populations to determine if any special regulations are warranted.

NR 44 Development Class: Recreation - Type III
Development within this area would be minimal to preserve the natural characteristics of Huber Lake. Access to the area and lake would be by foot or bicycle via a 3/4 mile path from a small trailhead parking lot. No motors of any type would be allowed on Huber Lake from the Park.

The following facilities are proposed for this site:
- Remote parking at the trailhead- 30 Spaces;
- Internal paths and walks - 3/4 mile;
- Picnic sites – 3 individual, dispersed sites with picnic tables;
- Interpretive displays;

- Vault toilets 2x2 design, one set;
- Accessible fishing facility (Not necessarily a pier).
- Open shelter - 12' x 20'

--Interpretation and Education Program--

Within the Park System, interpretation is the process of helping each park visitor find an opportunity to personally connect with a place. Each individual may connect to the place in a different way. The goal of all interpretive services is to increase each visitor's enjoyment and understanding of the parks, and to allow visitors to care about the parks on their own terms. Because state parks belong to all of us, the Park System has a responsibility to protect this park for future generations. Understanding the park's importance to our natural and cultural world is the first step toward this preservation.

This plan proposes the following facilities/ displays be developed:

- Nature trail; (in Natural Recreation Management Area)
- Observation tower; (in Natural Recreation Management Area)
- Display Kiosks and signage at selected day use areas;
- Interpretive / education facility;
- Integrating the existing fire tower into the interpretive display that will allow a visitor to interact with the fire lookout "cab" in an accessible fashion.

All of these developments will be outlined further in a park interpretative plan that will be developed as part of the park operations. Recommended interpretive themes should include the social and ecological significance of the historical fires, the unique geological, topographic, and ecological features in and near the park, and the history and importance of the Peshtigo River dams to the park and region.

Other Park Facilities

--Visitor Service Zone--

Objectives:

1. Provide Park and Forest administrative headquarters services, public contact point and information facility.
2. Provide facilities to support the park interpretive program and serve park visitors participating in interpretive program activities.

NR 44 Recreation Classification: Special Management – Service and Administration. The primary development within this zone would be a building housing the Park Entrance Visitor Station (PEVS) with administrative offices, and a public interpretation/education center. See *Map B* for locations of the proposed facilities. Each are detailed below:

PEVS: It is proposed that a PEVS be integrated with the Peshtigo River State Forest Headquarters to provide a unified office space with the Governor Thompson State Park staff. The following facilities are proposed for the PEVS portion of this site:

- 1,500 SF building combining both State Park and State Forest staff;
- Visitor contact counters, displays and exhibits;
- Drive up window;
- Two modern public unisex restroom;
- Paved parking - 12 spaces.

Interpretation Center: It is proposed that an interpretive / education facility be incorporated into or attached to the PEVS building for easy visitor access and use. This facility would consist of a 1,200 SF of building space that would contain an interpreter's office, small workshop, and a room for presentations.

--Operations Services Zone--

Objectives: Provide facilities for maintenance and repair of equipment and storage of materials and equipment and office space for park and forest support staff.

NR 44 Recreation Classification: Special Management – Service and Administration It is proposed that the combined Park and Forest Shop/Storage Building would serve the maintenance and operation needs of both Governor Thompson State Park and Peshtigo River State Forest. This facility would not be open to the general public.

The following facilities are proposed for this site:

- 4,000 SF of indoor storage space ;
- Office space;
- Break room;

- One set of modern restrooms.

This area would be closed to general public use.

General Management Provisions or Programs

Roads

It is proposed that the main public entrance road and main internal park roads would be permanent two-way all-season roads designated as NR 44 moderately developed. Design speeds would be 25 mph or less on these 3 miles roads.

Other use area roads and access drives would be permanent seasonal or permanent year round single and occasionally two-lane roads. Examples would be internal campground roads and access drives from the main park road. These roads are classified as NR 44 lightly developed with design speeds would be 15 mph or less on about 3.25 miles of these road types.

See *Map B* for locations of the proposed roads.

Summary of Recreation Development and Management

Listed below in Tables 2-1, 2-2 and 2-3 are summaries of the proposed major developments within the Park. Overall, it is estimated that approximately 11% of the park will be developed for recreational uses.

Table 2-1: Summary of Proposed Camping Facilities

Camping Facility	Non-electric	Electric	NR 44 Classification
North Woods Lake indoor group Campground - two buildings	2	0	Type III
Northern Lights Outdoor Group Campground	3	2	Type IV Modern
Oak View Modern Family Campground	70	30	Type IV Modern
Caldron Falls Reservoir Walk-in Campsites	3	0	Type III Rustic
Total 110 sites	**78 (72%)**	**32 (28%)**	

Table 2-2: Summary of Proposed Trail Mileage's and Development Level

Type	Miles	NR 44 Classification
Snowmobile	2.75	Lightly Developed
Nature	0.5	Fully Developed
Bike	5.0	Fully Developed
Hike/ski	10.75	Lightly Developed
Total	19.0	

Table 2-3: Summary of Other Recreational Development

Other Development
Woods Lake day use area
Huber Lake day use area
Caldron Falls Reservoir vistas
Caldron Falls Reservoir water / boat access
Outdoor theater / amphitheater
Scenic overlook tower
Park entrance visitor station
Roads
Interpretation center

Proposed Vegetative Management

The vegetation on all land within the boundary of Governor Thompson State Park would be managed using prescriptions and techniques intended to produce specific results or conditions in fulfillment of the master plan Vision Statement and Goals. The main Goal related to vegetative management is to "…provide and maintain a variety of high quality native communities within the ecological capabilities of the site…" The key phrase "…within the ecological capabilities of the site…" is critical to understanding this proposed management strategy. The number and diversity of communities or forest types would be limited to those that have a likelihood of occurring naturally on this site, given the existing conditions. All areas of the park would be managed, some actively and some passively.

Several areas of forest within the park would be managed with specific objectives that would require active management. Other areas would be managed passively, using the process of natural succession to influence the structure and composition of vegetative communities. Special vegetation management, including site clearing and replanting, would be required in and around public use areas and facilities.

General Vegetation Management Policies

Forest Pest and Disease Control

The gypsy moth, forest tent caterpillar and other forest infestations are a serious threat to forest resources in Marinette County and throughout Wisconsin. Continuous monitoring and appropriate treatment measures would take place as needed and feasible to protect the forest resources of the park.

Oak Management

Black Oak, Northern Pin Oak, and Red Oak dominate the dry to dry-mesic uplands in the Park. The pre-settlement vegetation included oak savanna and pine-oak barrens communities that were maintained by frequent fire. In the absence of fire these stands will naturally succeed to a mixture of Oak, white pine and red maple.

Oak Wilt, two-lined chestnut borer, and gypsy moth are common stresses on these dry sites. The optimum strategy for controlling the spread of these out-breaks is to keep the forest growing in a thrifty condition through periodic improvement thinnings, sanitation harvests, and trenching and herbicide applications.

Oak is a sun-loving tree that will regenerate naturally on these sandy sites if even-age regeneration techniques are employed. Other measures would include educating staff and

park visitors about these insect and disease problems, and restricting the cutting of oak to winter months when the trees are dormant.

Aspen Management

38% of the upland forest within the park is made up of the aspen forests. Aspen is a sun loving, early successional, pioneer tree species that regenerates following natural disturbance (wind, fire), or via root suckers following a regeneration harvest.

It is a valuable wildlife species providing food and cover for a variety of wildlife including ruffed grouse, deer, woodcock and turkey.

Maintaining an aspen component in the park would require periodic regeneration harvests at 55-year intervals to establish well-stocked new stands via coppice regeneration.

Stands that are allowed to grow past maturity will slowly convert to red maple, white pine, black cherry and oak on these dry sites as the aspen falls out of the overstory due to old age.

Non-native plants

Vast expanses of bluegrass turf would be avoided. Open space grasslands, construction-disturbed sites, and road construction margins would be planted with prairie grass species or other native site-appropriate grasses and forbs. Grass mowing, if done at all, would be confined to road margins and immediate areas around facilities. An exception to this would be mowing in designated use areas where a shorter turf grass would be more appropriate.

Trees and shrubs may be planted for specific reasons in the park. This would be primarily for ornamental or practical reasons. Planting could be done to provide screening of an unwanted view or for increasing user privacy. Plantings could be done to provide a windbreak or for shade. This would happen primarily in designated use areas and adjacent to public facilities. Native plant materials endemic to the region of northeastern Wisconsin are recommended. Example: black walnut and sycamore would not be planted in the park, even though specimens can be found in northeast Wisconsin. Open fields would be kept in an open condition unless specifically described otherwise in the master plan.

Pine Plantations

Three red pine plantations exist within the park, covering about 24 acres. They are embedded within several different management zones. The pine plantations will be managed as outlined below.

Short-term objective: Manage for large diameter pines and for a more natural stand appearance. Encourage or introduce other trees species as a component of the stand.

Long-term objective: Over a 50+ year period this stand will naturally convert to more shade tolerant species such as red maple, white pine, oak and ash with each successive that allows more light to reach the forest floor.

Due to the nutrient-poor xeric nature of the soils, supplemental planting may also be used to enhance conversion to other species. Improvement thinnings would be made in these plantations every seven to ten years, removing small diameter, and high risk trees and promoting the development of large diameter trees.

Vegetative Management by Use Zones

Visitor Services Zone

*Visitor Services Zone Objective***:** Provide an attractive public use setting using native trees and selective ornamental plantings.

Plant materials native to the region and to local site conditions would be emphasized. However, plantings close to buildings or structures would be allowed more flexibility in their origins, and specialized nursery varieties of plant material may be used for specific effects.

Mature Aspen exists within this zone, and it is recommended that selective harvesting take place with the construction of the new entrance ways. These harvesting zones will be definde once detailed site plans have been developed for this zone.

Camping Zone and Woods Lake Day Use Zone

Objective: Provide an attractive, safe, and generally naturally appearing vegetative environment for developed camping and day use activities.

Vegetative management in camping areas would emphasize safety and the continuous monitoring and removal of hazardous trees. In general, the existing tree canopy in which a camping facility is located would remain as the dominant canopy type. Camp areas would be located to take advantage of existing forest types. No attempts would be made to establish or change the forest type in or around a camp are merely for the purpose of having different trees to look at. The density and composition of vegetation in a designated camp area may be changed for specific purposes, however. Harvesting, planting, herbicide application and fire are techniques that could be used. The area will be monitored for hazard trees and such tress will be removed. All tree removal would be done in ways that minimize the visual and audible impacts to users of these areas.

Active Recreation Zone

Objective: Maintain the majority of the forests within this management zone in a natural appearing condition and, in the long-term establish a wide range of age classes and older forest conditions.

Except for within the aspen management area, natural process, including the natural succession of forest types to a climax forest, would be allowed to predominate within this area. Passive management would predominate here, active forest management, such as tree removal and brushing, would occur to establish and maintain roads, trails and other facilities; and, when appropriate, in response to major catastrophic disturbances. The

decisions on how to respond after catastrophic events would be governed by the general policy for the park found on page 34.

Aspen Management Area with the Active Recreation Zone

Objective: Maintain the aspen timber type within the designated area in several age classes for forest habitat diversity.

The size of the proposed aspen management zone would be about 64 acres. Its approximate shape and location is shown on *Map C*, however, the exact shape and location of the aspen perpetuation zone would be determined in the field. Small patch cutting (via clear-cutting) would be done at intervals to regenerate and maintain aspen in several different age classes.

Scenic Management Zone

Zone Objective: Maintain the forests within the Scenic Management Zone in a natural appearing condition, and in the long-term establish a wide range of age classes and areas with older forest habitat conditions, including den trees and dead and down coarse woody debris.

Natural process, including the natural succession of forest types to a climax forest, would be allowed to predominate within this area, except within special management areas described below. Passive management would predominate here, active forest management, such as tree removal and brushing, would occur to develop and maintain roads, trails and other public use facilities or to remove hazard trees near them; and, where appropriate, in response to major catastrophic disturbances. The decisions on how to respond after catastrophic events would be governed by the general policy for the park found on page 34. Within the Scenic Management Zone invasive exotic plants may be removed and appropriate native trees or shrubs may be planted for landscaping and ecosystem enhancement purposes.

Park Road and Huber Lake Trail Corridor Enhancement within the Scenic Management Zone

Site Objective: Maintain high visual quality of the forest along this main travel corridor.

To meet shorter-term visual quality objectives, several areas along the main park road and the Huber Lake trail corridor would have more active management. Each of these special forest management areas are shown on *Map C* and discussed below.

The primary forest stands along this corridor are oak and aspen. The soils in these areas tend to be dry with poorer nutrient levels. Management objectives and prescriptions each of these sites are provided below.

Oak Management: For aesthetic reasons, red oak in two high-visibility zones flanking the main park roadway and Huber Lake Trail would receive special management attention to encourage and maintain the health and vigor of these oak stands. Eventually, these stands would be allowed to naturally convert to red maple or white pine, depending on site characteristics and understory. Over the long-term the oak component will naturally convert to other tree species such as red maple and white pine.

The first two years of management would be devoted to observation and tracking of understory growth within the oak stands. No cutting would take place during this period. Later, management prescriptions using intermediate, selective harvesting and thinning of these stands would be tailored to facilitate the predicted growth and successional patterns of the individual designated areas. The size of the two areas would total about 69 acres. Their approximate shapes and locations are shown on *Map C*, however, the exact shapes and locations of the oak management zones would be determined in the field.

Aspen Management: Management on these aspen dominated sites along the corridor would be to encourage the natural succession from aspen to a mixed forest stand having a strong component of longer-lived tree species such as white pine, red oak or red maple.

Measures to achieve this goal could include intermediate thinning by selective harvesting, as well as supplemental plantings. Supplemental planting could be employed to encourage faster or more thorough succession. The size of the two zones would be about 120 acres. Their approximate shapes and locations are shown on *Map C*, however, the exact shapes and locations of the aspen management zones would be determined in the field.

Native Community Management Areas

There are two opportunities to manage for unique native communities within the park. These areas are shown on *Map C*. One is the fire-maintained pine-barrens community, which is now rare but historically was abundant in this area of the state. The other native community type is wild rice, which is uncommon in the area.

Barrens

Objectives: Restore and maintain two sites as pine barrens communities, one of 20 acres and the other of 16 acres, to provide biological diversity to the park landscape and to provide educational opportunities for park visitors.

Management Prescriptions: Prescribed burning is the primary means of establishing and perpetuating the barrens type. The 16-acre barrens site will need to be burned repeatedly to fully establish the desired mix of species. The initial burning would take place every two to four years. Thereafter, a "maintenance" burn would be conducted every seven to ten years. The 20-acre site east of Woods Lake is already fairly typical barrens. One prescribed burn is recommended now to rejuvenate the barrens. Then fire would be used at intervals of seven to ten years for maintenance. Field inspection would determine the actual fire frequency in both barrens sites.

Authorized Management Activities: Selective cutting, herbicide application, prescribed fire and planting would all be permitted management activities.

Wild Rice

Objectives: Protect and maintain wild rice beds (*Zizania palustris*) on the eastern shore area of Woods Lake.

The location is shown on *Map C*. This area will be protected from physical disturbance or damage; and environmental conditions that favor wild rice growth are to be preserved. Interpretive and restrictive signs may be posted in the area. Rice harvesting rice will not be allowed, except as part of an interpretive program.

Proposed Park Boundary Expansion

Governor Thompson State Park has a current approved acreage of about 2415 acres. This master plan proposes an expansion of the Park boundary by about 1520 acres. This would bring the proposed park acreage goal to about 3935 acres. The proposed park boundary is shown on *Map B.* These additional lands, if acquired and added to the park would provide permanent protection to important park resources, buffer from incompatible uses, provide access control or clearer boundary lines, and provide space for future recreational facility development. All land would be acquired only from willing sellers at fair market value.

There are five areas of recommended acquisition shown on the master plan map. Each is named according to its location and main features for easy reference. Each area has a specific purpose for its inclusion in the state park boundary. These additions would total 1520 acres.

1. **Huber Lake Addition**
   Size: About 280 Acres.
   Purpose: Acquire balance of shoreline frontage on Huber Lake. Also buffer Huber Lake from encroachment by development or other non-compatible use.

2. **Handsaw Creek Addition**
   Size: About 840 Acres
   Purpose: Protect headwater and watershed areas of Handsaw Creek, a Class I Trout Stream. All land in this addition drains into Handsaw Creek. Also provide expanded trail development opportunities.

3. **Woods Lake Outlet Addition (Includes lots on Parkway Rd.)**
   Size: About 246 Acres
   Purpose: Acquire frontage on Woods Lake and protect the outlet stream of Woods Lake. Protect areas of native wild rice beds on Woods Lake. Provide additional upland for potential future trail development linked with Peshtigo River State Forest.

4. **The "L" Addition**
   Size: About 120 Acres
   Purpose: Acquire frontage on Woods Lake. Acquire wetland and bogs areas associated with Woods Lake. Protect areas of native wild rice beds on Woods Lake. Provide additional upland for potential future trail development linked with Peshtigo River State Forest.

5. **Fabian Lane Addition**
   Size: 33.7 Acres
   Purpose: Protect a wetland feeder to Spring Creek, a stream that flows into Woods Lake. Acquisition would also prevent development along the borders of the wetland

on the south side of Fabian Lane. Acquisition would also provide buffering for the modern campground planned for a nearby site.

Boundary Adjustment between the Park and State Forest

It is also proposed that approximately 200 acres of land designated as Peshtigo River State Forest lying to the northwest of the current park boundary on the Caldron Falls shoreline be included within the park. This area is shown on *Map B*.

This land re designation would provide sites for the development of walk-in camp areas and vistas as described in the recreation section. By doing this, it will simplify the park boundary and eliminate potential public uncertainty about hunting regulations.

Land Acquisition Policies

All property purchases are on a willing seller basis. The Department is required by state law and federal laws to pay "just compensation", which is the estimated market value based on an appraisal by a certified licensed appraiser. At times, it is in the interest of the Department and the landowner for the Department to acquire partial rights to a property- an easement. The Department has a number of easement alternatives available to address these situations.

Landowners within the state park boundary will be contacted periodically by Department staff to explain the Department's land acquisition program and to see if they have an interest in selling their property.

Aides in Lieu of Taxes

For all new properties purchased, the Department makes an annual payment in lieu of real estate taxes to replace property taxes that would have been paid if the property had remained in private ownership. The payment is made to the local taxing authority where the property is located. More detailed information on how the Department pays property taxes may be found in a publication titled, *Public Land Property Taxes*, PUB-LF-001.

Operations and Administration of Current and Future Conditions

Existing Facilities

Existing facilities for operations and administration are located in the Operations and Visitor Services Zone.

Existing Other Non-Public Buildings

Temporary Residential Rental Building (The Duplex – Nighthawk and Whippoorwill) DNR # 6717)
This building is temporarily being used as an employee-housing rental. When the Woods Lake Day Use Area is completed it would be removed by public sale or by contractor and the site would be reclaimed. The septic tank and absorption field and all related materials and equipment would be removed. All concrete and demolition debris would be removed and the excavation backfilled with appropriate material. The ground would be graded to a natural appearing contour and topsoil and seed applied. The park manager would establish a timetable for this activity.

Residential Rental Building (Forest View) DNR # 6718
This building is presently unused. When the Woods Lake Day Use Area is completed it would be removed by public sale or by contractor and the site would be reclaimed. The well, septic tank and absorption field and all related materials and equipment would be removed. All concrete and demolition debris would be removed and the excavation backfilled with appropriate material. The ground would be graded to a natural appearing contour and topsoil and seed applied. The park manager would establish a timetable for this activity.

Residential Rental Building (Ma's House) DNR # 6705
This building is presently being utilized as an employee-housing rental, to provide on-site presence of a park manager. The building has been used for this purpose since the park was established. The use of this structure for employee housing would be continued with rental and responsibility agreements until the major park development is completed and the Woods Lake Day Use Area is completed. Then it would be removed by public sale or by contractor and the site would be reclaimed. The well, septic tank and absorption field and all related materials and equipment would be removed. All concrete and demolition debris would be removed and the excavation backfilled with appropriate material. The ground would be graded to a natural appearing contour and topsoil and seed applied. The park manager would establish a timetable for this activity.

Temporary Park Office – DNR # 6694
This building, the former dining hall and Woods Lake Resort office is presently being utilized as a temporary Governor Thompson State Park manager's office. It also serves as the temporary headquarters for the Peshtigo River State Forest management staff. The use of this building would continue until the permanent Park Entrance Visitor Station is constructed. Then it would be removed by public sale or by contractor and the site would be reclaimed. The septic tank, holding tanks, grease traps, and absorption field and all related materials and equipment would be removed. All concrete and demolition debris would be removed and the excavation backfilled with appropriate material. The ground would be graded to a natural appearing contour and topsoil and seed applied. The park manager would establish a timetable for this activity.

Temporary Workshop DNR # 6706
This 24'x 40' steel building has been repaired and made usable as a temporary workshop for minor carpentry projects and brush painting. It would continue to be utilized for this purpose until the permanent Shop/Storage Building is constructed. Then it would be removed by public sale or by contractor and the site would be reclaimed. The holding tank, and all related materials and equipment would be removed. All concrete and demolition debris would be removed and the excavation backfilled with appropriate material. The ground would be graded to a natural appearing contour and topsoil and seed applied. The park manager would establish a timetable for this activity.

Temporary Vehicle Storage Building DNR # 6708
This wooden frame construction building is currently utilized as a storage garage for park and forest vehicles and other state-owned equipment. It would continue to be utilized for this purpose until the permanent Shop/Storage Building is constructed. Then it would be removed by public sale or by contractor and the site would be reclaimed. All concrete and demolition debris would be removed and the excavation backfilled with appropriate material. The ground would be graded to a natural appearing contour and topsoil and seed applied. The park manager would establish a timetable for this activity.

Miscellaneous Small Buildings DNR # 6719 – Open Storage Shed, DNR # 6723 – Woodshed, DNR # 6724 – Garden Shed, DNR # 6851 – Garden Shed
These buildings would be retained and used for park purposes, primarily storage of materials or small equipment. Some are small enough to be moved to different locations on the property, if necessary.

Vegetation Management

The vegetation within the operations services zone would be managed as a utilitarian landscape with native trees and minimal ornamental plantings. Native and specialized nursery varieties of plans may be used.

Existing Roads

Governor Thompson State Park would have a single entrance from the south off of Ranch Road. The new entrance road alignment would be changed from an existing road to avoid paralleling the nearby high voltage line and provide more visual interest.

Abandonment of Town Road (Paust Lane)

When permanent park development takes place Paust Lane would no longer be needed as a park road. The Department would petition the Stevenson Town Board for abandonment of the right-of-way. Road materials would be removed and the roadbed rehabilitated to a natural condition with topsoil and seed.

Partial Abandonment of Boat Landing 13 Road

When the boat landing along Caldron Falls is upgrade or when development to the Oak View Family campground has started, the Department shall petition the Stevenson Town of Board for abandonment of the right of way within the Park boundary. Road materials would be removed and the roadbed rehabilitated to a natural condition with topsoil and seed.

Old unimproved roadways and trails

There are many miles of old roadways and trails throughout the park. Some sections will be converted to new designated trails or become part of the new park road system. The remaining road and trail sections will be abandoned. At the discretion of the park superintendent, these old roads and trails may be actively abandoned or allowed to naturally revert to trees.

Operations Policies

Accessibility

All developments would comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) for programs and facilities. The Department recognizes a need to provide reasonable access to Department lands for persons with disabilities, which includes permitting persons with disabilities to use vehicles on Department lands.

Protection of Historic and Archaeological Features

All new facility development sites (boat landings, parking lots, buildings) would be inspected prior to construction to locate and evaluate any evidence of significant archaeological or historic material. These cultural resource surveys would be conducted in compliance with federal laws and state guidelines on historic preservation. Appropriate steps would be taken to protect and preserve all significant sites found. Any existing sites that have been identified would receive special protection and management.

Natural Heritage Inventory Screening

During the pre-planning and master planning phases for Governor Thompson State Park Natural Heritage Inventory investigations were conducted. Results of these investigations

are given in Chapter Three of this document. Prior to specific construction or management activities, the individual sites would be screened and the Natural Heritage Inventory again consulted to locate and evaluate any evidence of the presence of threatened or endangered plant or animal species. Federal and state guidelines would be followed, and appropriate steps would be taken to protect and preserve all threatened or endangered species.

Landscape Plan
All new site and facility development plans would include a landscaping plan emphasizing native plant site restoration and encouraging appropriate levels of ecological diversity.

Refuse Management
Visitors to Governor Thompson State Park may be required to carry out whatever they bring in. Refuse receptacles or collection at the campsites, day use sites, or Department-managed access points (e.g., parking lots) would not be provided. However, solid waste and recycling containers would be provided for visitors to deposit their refuse at the entrance/exit drive to the modern campground area.

Deer Hunting
Overbrowsing by deer has a significant impact upon vegetation and also can severely limit reproduction of some desirable species. If closed to deer hunting, parks become island refuges with significantly higher deer numbers than surrounding hunted areas. Experience with other parks shows that some type of deer hunting is an important tool to help manage deer numbers. The size of the deer herd must be reduced to protect the diversity of vegetation in the park. Managing the size of the deer herd in Governor Thompson State Park would be done using hunting as a tool.

It is proposed that the property would be open for the traditional 9-day deer gun-hunting season. The park would be managed as an integral part of the deer management unit in which it is currently located - Unit 49A. A two-year trial period would be implemented, after which DNR staff would evaluate the effectiveness of the effort. Changes in policies on hunting within the park would be made with guidance from the wildlife biologist and the State Parks program. Additional control measures may be used if hunting alone does not sufficiently control deer numbers. For public safety some areas of the park would be closed to hunting. The establishment and design of the areas closed to hunting would be at the discretion of the park manager.

Bears in the Park
Black bear are present and plentiful on the property. The local wildlife biologist recommends that GTSP follow policy currently used by other State Parks with bear populations; educate and strictly enforce the park users responsibility to make food inaccessible to bears (and other wildlife) and exclude bear access to garbage. Bears that become a nuisance or a threat to people or property will be dealt with by USDA-WS, the agency contracted to handle all nuisance bear complaints. USDA-WS will evaluate each bear complaint and take appropriate action such as technical advice, trapping – relocation

and euthanizing. While no State Park currently has a bear hunting season, if the local manager and biologist feel it is necessary to mitigate the effects of the park's bear population, it is a tool that is available for use.

Invasive Species Control
A program of regular monitoring and inspection for other invasive exotic species would be implemented on the park. There are both aquatic and terrestrial species of concern. Some common invasive exotics are purple loosestrife, garlic mustard, spotted knapweed, tatarian honeysuckle, buckthorn, black locust, zebra mussel, Eurasian water millfoil, etc. Control measures appropriate to the specific species would be used. These may include manual harvesting, extermination, use of herbicides or poisonous agents, fire, natural predators and magnetic pulses.

Management of Over-Abundant, Nuisance Wildlife
Wildlife species such as skunk, raccoon, and beaver periodically have extremely high populations, resulting in nuisance problems and, in some cases, possible health hazards for park visitors. Management of these species would include the controlled removal of these animals during high population periods or when excessive human exposure and/or danger exists.

Response to Catastrophic Events
Catastrophic events, including fire, disease, insect infestation or timber blowdown would be managed on a case by case basis. Particular management options would be chosen after considering multiple factors including, life/safety, improvements impacted and threatened, resources impacted and threatened, goals and objectives of the property and the management area, and costs and benefits of managing or not managing the event. The normal response to wildfire on the property would be to protect life, property and the resource by putting out the fire with immediate initial attack. Watershed protection after extinguishing the fire would be accomplished using Best Management Practices (BMPs).

Land rehabilitation would be done where needed to prevent non-point source pollution of Woods Lake and its' tributaries and wetlands; Huber Lake and its' tributaries and wetlands; Caldron Falls Reservoir of the Peshtigo River and its' tributaries and wetlands on the property as prescribed in the Forestry Best Management Practices Handbook for non-point source pollution.

Public Communication Plan
The Governor Thompson State Park Superintendent is the public contact official for this property. Mailings, news releases and other means may be used to notify the public of significant issues or events that occur on the property. The superintendent or property manager would maintain a mailing list of persons or groups interested in the park or park issues. As feasible, the property manager may publish an annual newsletter or mailing.

Yearly Management Assessment
The property manager would coordinate, schedule, and lead a yearly meeting to document and assess progress on the management actions accomplished during the previous year and plan management activities for the upcoming year. A file would be

kept with these yearly assessments in preparation for implementation of the Manual Code 9314.1(C), which calls for formal plans to determine progress on implementation and whether the plan accomplished the intended results.

CHAPTER THREE: Supporting or Background Information

Governor Thompson State Park (GTSP) is designated as a state park under Chapter 27, Wis. Stats. and is located in central Marinette County west of the Village of Crivitz, Wisconsin and about 60 miles north of Green Bay. The property is partiality located on the Caldron Falls Reservoir and is adjacent to the Peshtigo River State Forest. The park currently has 2,415 acres and approximately 3.5 miles of shoreline along Caldron Falls Reservoir.

The Year 2000 was celebrated as the 100th Anniversary of the creation of Wisconsin's State Park System. To commemorate this Centennial the Department of Natural Resources acquired 1987 acres of land comprising Paust's Woods Lake Resort, plus about 200 acres of adjacent land fronting on Caldron Falls Reservoir from Wisconsin Public Service Corporation (WPS). Together, these two properties formed the 2,187acre core of the new State Park. Woods Lake Resort was a popular family-oriented establishment that had been operated by the Paust family for three generations. The estimated 200-acre Caldron Falls Reservoir property acquired from WPS was part of land holdings associated with hydroelectric power generation at the Caldron Falls Dam on the Peshtigo River. An existing WPS boat landing (#13) was included in this acquisition.

In December of 2000, the Natural Resources Board, acting on the recommendation of a DNR Feasibility Report, officially established the project as "Caldron Falls Centennial State Park" with an approved acreage goal of 2,187 acres. This acreage goal was comprised of the two properties: the former Woods Lake Resort and the 200 acres from Wisconsin Public Service Corporation. In January 2001, the Natural Resources Board changed the official property name to "Governor Tommy G. Thompson Centennial State Park" to honor the Governor's active role in promoting Wisconsin's natural resources and its state park system. The project is referred to in this master plan as "Governor Thompson State Park."

Summary of Ecological Resources

Topography, Geology and Soils

The site lies in the southern end of the Northeast Sands Ecological Unit of the National Hierarchical Framework. The Northeast Sands unit is characterized by glacial topography with sandy soils and extensive oak and pine barrens forest. Vegetation of the region consists predominantly of aspen and paper birch on sites that were once dominated by red pine and white pine. Jack pine remains dominant on the outwash plains with the presence of northern pin oak as well.

The surface features of Marinette County and the proposed project site are the result of glacial activity. The ice that covered the area during the most recent ice age was part of the Labrador Ice Sheet, which was located East of Hudson Bay, Ontario. The Green Bay lobe of this glacier covered what is now Marinette County. The Peshtigo River now flows through glacial deposits that would be characterized as pitted outwash. A moraine traverses the park site from southwest to northeast and comprises the highest elevations in the park. The primary soils are sands that were laid down as sediments remaining from the melting glacier.

Most of the agriculture in the area occurs on these sandy outwash deposits. Corn, potatoes, wheat and alfalfa are the main crops raised on these soils. Corn and potatoes are commonly raised with the aid of mechanical irrigation. Some areas contain deposits of gravel mixed with sand.

Bedrock underlying the area is primarily granite and sandstone. Granite bedrock is evident at the surface in many areas of the proposed project site. This is a factor to consider when developing facilities that would require digging foundations, drilling wells, laying cable or pipeline, or installing wastewater treatment systems. Granite outcrops also provide some of the more interesting topographic features both on land and as islands in the Peshtigo River reservoirs.

Land Capabilities

The Governor Thompson State Park site is about half wetland and half upland (see *Maps D and E*), with sandy soils predominating on the higher ground. Enough elevation may exist to support conventional wastewater systems. More than adequate upland is available to make conventional campgrounds feasible. Many of the existing trails and service roads can be adapted to use as internal roads and trails for the recreation area. These would facilitate connection with Boat Landing #13 on Caldron Falls Reservoir.

The size and remote character of the site would accommodate primitive-style outdoor recreation such as hiking and backpack camping. The area around Huber Lake would be ideal, as would some areas adjacent to Caldron Falls Reservoir.

The rolling terrain of the former resort site makes it an ideal place for cross-country skiing in the winter. For several seasons a local ski race the “Thunder Mountain Classic” was hosted by Paust’s Woods Lake Resort, with trails provided by the resort owners.

About 200 Acres of former WPS frontage on Caldron Falls Reservoir is included in this park proposal. The associated upland is much the same character as the rest of the park. The convoluted shape of the shoreline in the immediate vicinity provides several linear miles of water frontage in a relatively small area. Water depths nearby range from very shallow in some areas to twenty to thirty feet. Potential activities are trail use, walk-in camping, nature study and sunset viewing.

Natural Communities

When looking at the park forests as a natural community type, the leading upland dominant is the Northern Dry-Mesic Forest community, except in those areas that were previously managed for aspen. The dry-mesic forest stands occur on sandy loams or sandy soil where organic matter has built up, or on rocky glacial river terraces. A great deal of tree diversity from stand to stand is found within the study area. Some stands are dominated by white and red pine, others by mature scrub oak mixed with red, bur, and white oak, and red and sugar maple. Other trees present include paper birch, trembling and big-toothed aspen *and* basswood, hemlock, and balsam fir. Historically, scrub oak, also called northern pin oak or Hill's oak, probably occurred primarily as a shrub in jack pine barrens. This trend of an increase in mature scrub oak following fire suppression is duplicated in northwest Wisconsin in the large former jack pine barrens in Burnett, Washburn and Douglas counties (Radeloff et al., 1998). Young white pine, black cherry, red maple, red oak and balsam fir are often found thriving in the stand having moved in from an adjacent seed source. Stands located by the banks of the Peshtigo River will often include mesic or wet mesic elements within a few feet of more xeric species.

Table 3-1 and *Map D* summarizes vegetative cover types of the park from a recent timber survey. When interpreting the timber data it's important to bear in mind that most forest cover types contain a mix of tree species; the table shows the dominant species present.

Table 3-1: Vegetative Cover Type - Acres

Plant Cover Type	Acres	Plant Cover Type	Acres
Aspen	872	Shrubs	44
White Pine	262	Red Maple	21
Oak	225	Red / Scotch Pine	19
Scrub Oak	206	Grass	18
Swamp Hardwood	142	Upland Brush	16
Jack Pine	88	Tamarack	14
Spruce	69	Hardwood	10
Brush / Tag Elder	47	Cedar	5
Swamp Conf	31	Rock Outcrop	5
Hemlock	29	Keg	2
Emg Veg	22	Keg	2
(developed lands are excluded) Total 2,161 acres			

Dominant Tree Species of the Park

Aspen: Aspen grows across the property on a wide variety of sites. Having been specifically managed for by the previous owners it is dominant timber type, covering about 40 percent of the property. In some cases it's in nearly pure stands, in others it's present with a mix of other tree species.

Pine: White pine makes up the second most abundant timber type of the park at 12 percent, being a common component of the Northern Dry-Mesic and the Northern Mesic Forest community types. Red and Scotch pine are present in a few acres of plantation plantings.

Oak: Oak grows throughout the park on a variety of sites. Scrub oak (*Quercus ellipsoidalis*) is dominant or co-dominant with jack pine on sandy soils. Timber quality in these stands is generally poor and limited to fuel-wood, pulpwood, or at best, tie-logs.

Water / Fisheries Assessment

Water resources on the property consist of two inland lakes, Woods Lake (45.5 acres) and Huber Lake (29.1 acres). The park encompasses about half or more of the shoreline on each of these lakes. Other private parties own the balance of the lake frontage.

Woods and Huber Lakes are both recommended for Phosphorus monitoring due to the lack of available data. In addition, fish Mercury monitoring is recommended for Woods Lake through the Upper Green Bay Basin Integrated Management Plan. Active and productive fisheries do exist upon the inland lakes**.** Large mouth bass, northern pike, and pan fish are abundant.

Woods Lake is a maximum of 27 feet deep and has a fishery composed primarily of northern pike, largemouth bass and panfish. There is currently no public access to Woods Lake.

Huber Lake, also known as Deer Lake, is only a maximum of 8 feet deep, with a fishery believed to include bass, panfish and forage species. There is no public access to Huber Lake.

Handsaw Creek, which starts at Handsaw Lake, is a named trout stream and flows through parts of the park. It has cold, light brown stained clear water with a total length of about six miles and an average width of eight feet. Handsaw Creek has a population of brook trout and is a tributary to the South Fork of the Thunder River.

Two small, unnamed streams known locally as Lost Creek and Spring Creek flow into Woods Lake. No inventory data is available for either of these streams. Lost Creek originates in what may be a spring pond or seepage known locally as "Lost Lake." This pond is not officially named and is located just south of Ranch Road in T33N R18E Section 22. (There are three other named 'Lost Lakes' in Marinette County.)

Woods Lake Outlet is a 1.4 mile-long stream with an average width of six feet that flows from Woods Lake to High Falls Reservoir. Contrary to some reports, the fishery of Woods Lake Outlet is limited primarily to forage species.

Fisheries Resources

Various species of warmwater fish populate the reservoirs, rivers and streams of proposed Governor Thompson State Park including northern pike, walleye pike, yellow perch, bluegill, crappie, pumpkinseed, largemouth bass, smallmouth bass, white sucker, and forage species. Brook, brown and rainbow trout inhabit most of the smaller streams in the area as well as portions of the Peshtigo River. The Peshtigo River between Johnson Falls and Sandstone Falls is managed as special regulation category 5 trout waters..

Wildlife Resources/Deer/Bear

All of the wildlife types common to northern Wisconsin can be found here: white tailed deer, red fox, gray squirrel, fox squirrel, cottontail rabbit, ruffed grouse, woodcock, ring-necked pheasant, bobwhite quail, raccoon, muskrat, mink, otter, beaver, Canada goose, and many species of puddle and diving duck. Sandhill cranes are also present. A healthy population of black bear is present in Marinette County and it is not unusual to see bald eagles and osprey soaring above the reservoirs.

Since the property was acquired by the state in 2000 it has been closed to hunting. Wildlife biologists have noted that the deer population meets or exceeds the goals for the deer management unit in which it is located. The park is located in Deer Management Unit 49A. As long as the park remains closed to deer hunting it will essentially be a refuge. It is not unusual for a refuge to harbor a higher number of animals than the rest of the Deer Management Unit. A disadvantage to this is that after the hunting season the deer tend to stay in the refuge, browsing heavily on the understory vegetation. This can have serious long-term negative effects on the health and composition of forest stands.

Black bear are present and plentiful on the property. Bears that become a nuisance or a threat to people or property can be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. While no State Park currently has a bear hunting season, if the local manager and biologist feel it is necessary to mitigate the effects of the park's bear population, it is a tool that is available for use.

Cultural Resources

Available records show no known archaeological sites have been documented within the former Woods Lake Resort property. This does not preclude the possibility of future discoveries, however. One of the remaining structures on the property, a 100 foot former DNR Fire Tower, obtained by the property owners as surplus, is over 50 years old. It is listed on the Registry of Historic Fire Towers, a private national list created by fire tower enthusiasts. All other buildings on the property have been evaluated for historic value

Rare and Endangered Species

An initial, broad assessment of the park area was done to identify sites with threatened, endangered, and special concern species, or sites of potentially high-quality natural communities. Based on the Department's Wisconsin Natural Heritage Inventory database there are no known threatened, endangered or special concern species on the park property. There are two records for animals tracked by the NHI Program immediately adjacent to the park. Both of these are for the cyrano darter (*Nasiaeschna pentacantha*) a State Special Concern Dragonfly. These records were not found as part of a systematic search; rather, they were randomly located during a visit to the area by staff biologists. A more comprehensive inventory would be needed to better assess the presence of rare species in the park and adjacent area. Bald eagle (state special concern and federally listed) and osprey (state threatened) are found in along the Peshtigo River corridor.

A "course filter" screening analysis was done on the park and the adjacent state forest to identify potential sites that may contain threatened, endangered, and special concern species, or sites of potentially high quality natural communities. This analysis revealed three high quality or potentially high quality natural community sites on the park. These sites warrant a detailed field survey. Each are described below:

*Woods Lake***;** Wetlands and Barrens Complex: This is a 580 acre area which is mostly rolling upland. The uplands communities include Hill's oak woods, aspen thickets, good quality Hill's oak barrens, and clearings. The wetlands include tamarack - black spruce swamp, alder thicket, the shallow, 40 acre partially developed Woods Lake and its outlet stream. This site has good potential to hold rare barrens and wetland species. Rare species that should be searched for here include; crinkled hairgrass, dwarf bilberry, hairy beardtongue, Richardson sedge, white flowered ground cherry, dwarf milkweed Canada yew, Hudson Bay currant, northern bog sedge, small headed sedge, small yellow lady's-slipper, showy lady's-slipper, native wild rice and cuckoo flower.

*Scrub Oak***:** This is a 150 acre area on a low sandy narrow ridge with logged Hills oak woods with openings with young aspen and some barrens. There are also small clearings dominated by bluegrass. Blueberry is common along with hazelnut, sweet fern, and bracken fern. Other herb plants present, varying across the site, include Penn sedge, little and big bluestem, poverty sedge, oatgrass and rice grass. This site contains the potential habitat for the rare plants dwarf milkweed, Richardson sedge, crinkled hairgrass, white flowered ground cherry, hairy beardtounge, and dwarf bilberry.

*Huber Lake***:** Wetlands and uplands complex: This 513 acre site is mostly within the State Park. The upland habitat is mature scrub oak and some jack pine with a modified understory, and dry mesic forest and barrens. There are wetlands along the shore of the nearly undeveloped Huber Lake. These open bog wetlands are rich and diverse with leatherleaf, pitcher plants, wiregrass sedge, and a variety of willow species. Other wetlands are found in the southern part of this site and are primarily open sedge meadows around large open pools of water.

The upland sites here are potential habitat for the rare plants crinkled hairgrass, white flowered ground cherry, dwarf milkweed, and Richardson sedge. The conifer swamp sites may hold the rare Hudson Bay current, Northern bog sedge, small headed sedge and Canada yew. The open wet meadows, adjacent to the lake, are potential habitat for the rare plants dragons mouth, slim stemmed reed grass, cuckoo flower, marsh willow herb, downy willow herb and common bog arrow-grass.

Findings:

In terms of vegetative / timber management there are several small sites that may have the potential for restoration of the regionally rare pine/scrub oak barrens natural community. Barrens are the most unique ecological opportunity on the park. But at this time the Aspen is the prodominate forest coverage. Additional field survey work is required to assess the potential for Barrens restoration. There is an overabundant deer population and control in the park will be essential to avoid a long-term threat to forest reproduction and to the quality of the understory habitat.

The undeveloped shoreline is an attraction that draws visitors to the resource. Lake Noquebay - the largest waterbody in the watershed is heavily developed. While undeveloped shoreline is not unique within the region - the scale of this within the project area makes this an outstanding feature worth continued protection.

Summary of Recreational Resources

The Park property is located in a popular recreation area in Northeastern Wisconsin. Recreational actives that occur on or near the Park include fishing, boating, canoeing, river rafting, tubing, swimming, water skiing, hiking, picnicking, camping, golf and hunting, snowmobiling and cross country skiing.

The area in and around the Park offers a variety of scenic water feature views. Most of these are "wilderness-like" due to the undeveloped shoreline. The two large reservoirs provide grand views of open water while the lower sections of the project area provide more intimate views of the free flowing river.

Landbased Recreation

Nonmotorized

Camping

Camping is a popular recreational activity within the region. Within a 50 mile radius of the property, over 2,400 campsites are available. The majority of these sites have electricity. Upon the Flowage, 62 campsites are located within the county operated Twin Bridges Park on High Falls Flowage. WPSC designated 10 canoe sites on Johnson Falls, Seymour Rapids, and Spring Rapids that are now maintained by the PRSF.

Hunting

Hunting does occur near the property. The WPSC did allow hunting on these forestlands. The types of hunting included deer, turkey, bear, fox, coyote and small game. There is some waterfowl hunting done on the Flowages.

Limited hunting also took place within the park boundaries under the former owner.

Regionally, there are abundant hunting opportunities on federal, state and county lands.

Hiking

Within the Park property, over 22 miles of trails currently exist. Most of these trails are 16 feet or wider and are usually a 1/2 mile or less in length. Some trails do intersect with geological features around the property and also offer vistas of the lakes. The best way to describe this trail system would be a semi-stacked loop bisected by roads throughout the property.

Upon the PRSF property there are a number of volunteer trails that do cross the property, but no formal network exists.

Regionally, over 70 km of designated hiking trails exists on the surrounding counties. All of these trails are located on public lands.

Biking

Onroad

Locally the roads in and around the properties are mostly paved and in good condition for road biking. There is an established 24-mile loop from Crivitz that uses Parkway, Ranch and Caldron Falls roads, and Highway W. The Wisconsin State Bicycle map of this region does show County Highways A, C, X and W as good roads for bicycle riding.

Offroad

The GTSP property did have off road biking established under the former owner. There was a fee charged for this activity. There appeared to be no restrictions on where off road bikes could go, although the sandy soil did make for challenging conditions. Off road biking was allowed on the PRSF property.

Regionally, a number of off road trails exist both on federal and county forestlands along with Michigan and Wisconsin State Parks.

Skiing

Crosscounty ski loops exist within the PRSF. The PRSF maintains these loops. There is approximately a 5-km connector trail on private lands that connects the Seymour Rapids system to the Spring Rapids System. Together, these systems account for over 30 km of groomed trails.

The Park property was also groomed under the previous owner for both skate and classical skiing. A series of races were held on the property over the years.

Regionally, over 70 km of groomed trails exist in the surrounding counties. These trails are all located on public lands.

Horse

Horseback riding has not been allowed on the park. Since the State has taken ownership flowage lands, horseback riding is allowed on the PRSF. Regionally there are 34 miles of trails located on the National Forest. There are a number of horse stables located within the general area of the Park.

Motorized

Snowmobile

Table 3-2 lists the regional mileage totals by county. Marinette County has the largest total mileage within the region. There is also a vast network of trails within the Upper Peninsula.

Table 3-2: Regional Snowmobile Mileage's

County	Mileage
Oconto County	431 miles
Florence County	130 miles
Forest County	375 miles
Marinette County	446 miles
Total	1382 miles

ATV

The former owner of the GTSP property did not promote ATV use on the property. Regionally, over 400 miles of ATV trails exist, with some of these trails on roads.

Waterbased Recreation

Nonmotorized

Swimming

Clean water and numerous access points encourage swimming as a recreational activity on the flowages, lakes and rivers. Swimming is the second most popular activity within this setting. The sand beaches and granite rock structures allow for varied swimming experiences. However, there are very few established beaches within the flowages. Most swimming occurs at the boat landings or the County Parks.

Fishing

Excellent fishing occurs in and around the properties.

Huber Lake and Woods Lakes located on the property support a large mouth bass, northern pike, and pan fish fishery.

Caldron Falls Reservoir supports a high quality muskellunge fishery and is the only Class A muskellunge waters in the Marinette County. Currently 1,000 muskellunge fingerlings are stocked annually in the Caldron Falls reservoir. Other fishing opportunities in the Caldron Falls reservoir include largemouth bass, smallmouth bass, brown trout, bluegill, rock bass, yellow perch, black crappie and pumpkinseed.

High Falls Flowage also supports an excellent fishery of walleye, largemouth bass and smallmouth bass. Major panfish species include bluegill, rock bass, yellow perch, black crappie and pumpkinseed.

Regionally, this area offers some of the best trout fishing within the State. There are numerous Class I Trout Fisheries within a 50-mile radius of the project area.

Canoeing / Kayaking / Rafting

Abundant whitewater / quitewater paddling opportunities exist on both the Peshtigo River and other surrounding rivers and streams.

There are two whitewater segments near the property. The Roaring Rapids section just north of the property offers the Midwest's longest continuous whitewater that is runable most of the summer. This section offers class III-IV whitewater. Commercial rafting outfitters provide easy public access to this section with the take out for these trips at boat landing 12 - at the northern end of the PRSF property.

The other whitewater section is located from Johnson Falls Rd. to Kirby Lake Ln or Schaffer Rd. This section offers class I-III whitewater but is seldom run compared to other segments of the Peshtigo River.

The flowages and the lakes offer excellent quitewater paddling opportunities. Canoe travel time from boat landing 12 (the upper reach) to the Johnson Falls dam is approximately 11 hours. Marked portage routes do exist around the dams.

Motorized

Power Boating

Power boating is a popular activity on both Caldron Reservoir and High Falls Flowage. Many larger watercraft are attracted to these large size reservoirs and adequately large launching facilities. There are 19 rustic to semi-improved boat landings on Caldron and High Falls. Combined, they provide approximately 440 parking spaces. However, random observations of boat landings during holiday weekends showed 446 vehicles at these landings.

Personal Watercraft

Personal watercraft usage does occur upon both the Reservoir and Flowage. The existing launch sites allow for easy access for this watercraft. While not as popular as typical motor boating, there has been an increase in this use.

Recreational Trends

Overall, recreational demand within the area is expected to increase 6.8% between 1990 and 2020 (Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, Peshtigo River Multiple Project, Final Environmental Impact Statement, March 1997).

Within this region, supplies of recreational resources usually outweigh the recreational demand. This is in part due to the low population densities and abundant public lands. Nevertheless, there are still a few areas of concern that will warrant special attention in the future.

Statewide, and within this region, landbased motorized recreation continues to increase in demand. Due to the aging population and aggressive marketing campaigns, ATV and snowmobile usage continues to gain in participation. In addition, nonmotorized activities such as mountain biking and camping are on the increase. Regionally, because of the large tracts of public lands, most of these land based activities can coexist, but this must be looked at both from an ecological and demand perspective.

Another area that will warrant special attention is water based recreation. With limited large bodies of water within the region, there is a pressing demand for more motorized waterbased recreation. Since motorboat and Jet Ski sales and usage continue to increase, there will continue to be increased demands upon the property and the region now and into the future. This increasing demand will continue to pose challenges and threats to nonmotorized recreation.

Other recreational activities projected to increase within the region include camping, bicycling, canoe, and kayaking, golf, wildlife viewing and to a lesser extent fishing.

Findings:

Two of three largest waterbodies within the watershed are Caldron and High Falls with a a number of private and public recreational facilities that promote the use of these waters. WPSC surveys indicate that waterbased recreation is a popular activity. Since the water is a natural attraction, this result is not surprising. This becomes evident on the weekends with overcrowding at the PRSF boat landings. Swimming while a popular activity does have limited access points within the area. The County has built one beach at Twin Bridges Park, but not all other water access points have formal beaches although swimming does occur at these.

Motorized recreation is also popular with large trail networks. There are over 1,700 miles of snowmobile and ATV trails within a four county area these recreational uses are important to the region. But there is a lack of onroad bike trails, ATV trails, horse trails and interpretive trails within the area.

In addition, there area a number public and private camping facilities available within the region. There are however very few year round camping facilities and facilities along the Reservoir.

CHAPTER FOUR: Assessment of the Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Master Plan

The purpose of this chapter is to explain the potential environmental effects of the proposed management plan. An analysis of the environmental effects or impacts is an important element of the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the master plan. The intent of the EA is to disclose the environmental effects of an action (the master plan) to decision-makers and the public. Chapter 2 of this document describes the proposed action or preferred management alternative. Chapter 4 describes and evaluates the various alternatives that were considered as the preferred alternative was developed. No single alternative was chosen as the management/master plan. Elements of several alternatives were incorporated into the final preferred alternative. The EA in the master plan has been prepared to meet the requirements of the Wisconsin Environmental Policy Act (WEPA) and Chapter NR 150 of Wisconsin Administrative Code.

Impacts on Air Quality

During construction periods, dust may be present in the air surrounding project areas. Application of water from tank trucks is a common dust suppression practice that is used during highway construction. This technique may be appropriate for projects within the park. Impacts on air quality whether from fugitive dust particles or from exhaust emissions from construction equipment engines would be finite and transitory in nature. When construction is complete no residual impacts to air quality would be detectable

The impacts to air quality from motor vehicles drawn to the park by the establishment of 100 modern campsites, Day Use Facilities at Woods Lake and Huber Lake, or by other park facilities would be negligible. The current indirect source air permit thresholds are sources with 1,500 or more parking spaces, or highway projects with peak vehicle traffic volume greater than 1,800 vehicles per hour. The traffic due to projected development in this plan is well below these levels.

Impacts on Groundwater Resources

Wells, use of groundwater

A number of new potable water wells (about six) would be drilled to serve the proposed park facilities. None of the wells would individually qualify as high capacity wells, however taken in aggregate, Governor Thompson State park may be classified as a “high capacity property”. Because of the dispersed nature of these wells around the 2,415-acre site, the effect on the local water table is expected to be minimal.

Abandonment of old wells

Further, all unused wells associated with former uses of the site have been or will be appropriately abandoned when no longer needed. Sealing the groundwater from surface contamination would be the effect.

Modern Septic Systems and Vault toilets
Modern septic systems developed to service proposed park facilities will be constructed to applicable local and state Dept. of Commerce standards, effectively safeguarding the groundwater from contamination. A number of vault-style toilets would also be developed to serve more remote areas of the park. These are sealed from the groundwater and pumped regularly or as needed during the use season.

Removal of old septic systems
Several old septic systems of undetermined design have already been appropriately abandoned. Remaining functioning systems would also be appropriately abandoned when no longer needed. This would take place after new state park facilities are constructed and are operational. These measures will have the effect of further safeguarding the groundwater resource from contamination.

Impacts on Surface Water Resources
An increase in impervious surface area from infrastructure improvements will occur. Rooftops and hard-surfaced roads would be the main sources of sheet runoff. Road and path construction will avoid changing watercourse direction and flow, volume and velocity. Culverts will be sized accordingly. Pervious road and pathway surfaces would be used where impervious surfaces are not needed. Runoff from roadways and other impervious surfaces would be directed away from draining directly into nearby streams and lakes, thus minimizing any risks of water pollution from spilled or water-transported materials.

Land acquisition for boundary expansion and management under the state park master plan are measures that are anticipated to have a long-term beneficial effect on the surface water resources of the site and those receiving waters downstream. The main effects would accrue to Spring Creek within the park and Handsaw Creek, which flows out of the park and is a tributary to Thunder River. Preservation of watershed resources would also affect Woods Lake and Huber Lake.

Impacts on Geological Resources
New drilled potable water wells would penetrate the underlying granite bedrock in some places, however all wells would be drilled and installed according to state well drilling code, effectively minimizing any risk. Some rock excavation may be necessary for development of roads, parking lots, and facility foundations. Surface mining of rock is not anticipated.

Impacts on Visual/Scenic Resources
New structures and facilities would be evident internally. The appearance of new structures such as buildings, roads and use areas would be a definite change from the existing. However, recreational structures were commonplace during the site's history as a resort.

Vegetative management will assure that shoreline zones would remain natural or be restored to more natural appearance in use areas of the park. Change in the visual

qualities of the vegetative management areas would be noticeable over time as areas of oak and aspen are managed for certain objectives. Visual and audible affects would also be a by-product of the active management of forest vegetation.

Park entry road and a major property identification sign would be the only outward signs of park existence evident on Ranch Road. Most other park features would be internal to the property and therefore obscured from the outside view.

The removal of the lodge and cabins of the former resort complex, as viewed from the east shore, would cause an anticipated positive change in visual character of the western side of Woods Lake. The relocation and lowering of the existing firetower would noticeably change the skyline viewshed of Woods Lake.

Impacts on Land Use
The land use of the original 1987 acres of land purchased for this project would not change from recreational. Further, lands purchased including Boat Landing #13 were formerly dedicated to recreational lake access and would continue as such under this master plan. The main impact would be an anticipated increase in the level of active recreation on the state park site.

Most neighboring land use in the vicinity of Governor Thompson State Park is residential, recreational, or commercial forest. Some areas of commercial business development also exist. It is not unlikely that some increase in service sector business could occur as spin-off of state park uses. It is anticipated that some growth in recreation-oriented business development would take place in the vicinity the park. Local planning and zoning codes would regulate such development.

Impacts on Infrastructure and Transportation
Increase in local traffic may require local road maintenance increase.
Traffic through Crivitz may increase, especially during June, July and August.
Traffic counts on US 141 in the Crivitz area will probably increase due to park visitation. It is anticipated that US 141 will be the route-of-choice for people accessing and departing Governor Thompson State Park. From US 141 there are three principal routes of travel to the park. Each is a County Trunk Highway. The two that pass through Crivitz (CTH ‘W’ and CTH ‘A’) are expected to receive the most use. The third, (CTH ‘X’) passes through the unincorporated village of Middle Inlet and will likely receive less use by park visitors.

Local increases in traffic will be noted primarily in the months June, July and August when the majority of recreation takes place. Most vehicles visiting the park would be automobiles or light trucks, vans, or SUVs. Some would be vehicles towing camp trailers, small boats, or self-contained campers. It is anticipated that these vehicles may have an effect of increased wear and tear on roadways in the vicinity of the park, as well as increased traffic congestion at peak times.

Governor Thompson State Park will be a generator of solid waste. Wisconsin State Parks promote and participate in recycling programs to mitigate generation of non-recyclable material that must be disposed of in sanitary landfills. A licensed sanitary waste contractor will be hired to pick up recyclable waste and non-recyclable materials. Campers using remote walk-in campsites and day use areas will be required to observe a carry in, carry out policy.

Governor Thompson State Park will also be a customer of Wisconsin Public Service Corp. for electric service. The primary uses of electricity at the park will be for powering the buildings and pumping water. Moderate use of electricity will occur at the thirty electrified campsites in the modern campground.

Impacts of Noise

Construction noise resulting from capital improvements such as road building, vegetation management, building construction and the like could have a moderate impact on the park's neighbors and wildlife. All of these groups could be sensitive to this disruption, especially during warm weather when windows may be open. This noise would be peak (high level, short duration) during construction periods, rather than continuous. When the activities cease the impacts would cease.

The presence and activities of park visitors and campers may present a potential for reaction from neighbors or other park visitors and thus an impact. Regulations on the use of amplified sound devices (radios, stereos, etc) and loud conduct, exist for the purpose of minimizing the imposition of unwanted noise to neighbors of the park as well as neighbors inside the park, especially in camping situations. The 30 electric service campsites in the modern campground will be grouped together to minimize potential user conflicts between those using electrically powered conveniences and those that do not.

Impacts on Recreational Resources

The establishment of a 100-unit modern campground will increase camping opportunities in the Marinette County area. Thirty of the campsites would be electric sites and the remainder would be conventional. A further impact that is anticipated is the creation of additional demand for campsites at local private and public campgrounds. This effect is well known in other parts of the state. It is the policy of Wisconsin State Parks to work closely with other campground operators to assure that when the state park campground is filled to capacity, any prospective campers seeking a campsite are referred to neighboring facilities that have vacancies.

The establishment of non-road bicycle trails in the park will add significantly to the supply of trails in the region. The master plan Regional Analysis information shows an overall deficit in recreational bicycle trails.

The construction of a fully handicapped accessible camping facility at Governor Thompson State Park will provide a new resource for handicapped campers. Opportunities for fully handicap accessible camping experiences are rare to non-existent in Northeast Wisconsin State Parks. One such facility exists at Potawatomi State Park in

Door County and one is being developed at High Cliff State Park in Calumet County. A third such facility is planned for Hartman Creek State Park near Waupaca. These existing handicapped accessible facilities are all over one hundred miles from Governor Thompson State Park.

The routing of a pass-through snowmobile trail inside Governor Thompson State Park will decrease the risk level of the trail by removing it from the roadway where it is routed parallel to Ranch Road. The new trail route will be located near the south boundary of the park property to mitigate potential conflicts with other non-motorized winter park uses. impacts on biotic resources

Forest Communities

Vegetative management prescriptions proposed for the two red oak stands and three aspen stands would have the effect of changing the structure and composition of the selected forest stands. Two of the aspen stands would slowly be influenced to succeed to pine and oak types. The third aspen stand would be managed to perpetuate aspen. The use of clear-cutting in small patches would be the main management technique to perpetuate aspen. The oak stands would be selectively cut or intermediately cut to encourage health and vigor of the oak type existing on poor soils. The long-term succession of the oak may be to white pine as a climax species.

Management of the three pine plantations would have the short-term effect of producing large healthy trees as well as reducing the evidence of row planting. The long-term effect would be the elimination of the plantations as a type and eventual succession to oak or white pine. Harvest would be the main tool used to achieve this effect. Supplemental planting may also be used.

Management of the vegetation in the buffer zones on the shorelines of Woods Lake, Huber Lake and Caldron Falls Reservoir would basically be a no-cut prescription. The exception would be in case of a natural disaster or the need to remove a hazardous tree from a designated use area or trail. The long-range effect of this management would be the development of an old-growth character, with coarse woody debris evident on the ground and a broad age profile of climax forest.

Vegetative management in designated use areas would include removal of trees for construction, supplemental planting of new vegetation for landscape purposes and the removal of hazardous trees when the need arises. The effect of this management would be a gradual sanitizing of the forest and a more open appearance in designated use areas.

Vegetative management in the balance of the park characterized as forested upland and forested lowland, would be passive. Dead and downed trees that have fallen through natural causes would be left for inter-related insect and mammal habitat. These will not be removed unless they are determined to be a hazard. The anticipated effect of this management would be a slow succession to climax species and old growth conditions over a period of several hundred years.

In the short-term little if any change would be noticed. Some of the natural processes occurring may be considered “unsightly”, although these will be in the more remote and inaccessible parts of the property. They would at times be visible from trails. The forest floor would become littered with coarse woody debris.

In the longer term, there would be dead and downed trees in various stages of decomposition, serving as host for a multitude of creatures. The forest canopy would take on a dense character and gaps in the canopy from fallen trees would eventually be filled by the growth of other trees of the same community. Trees in every stage of life from seedling to maturity would be growing together.

Shrub Communities
Vegetative management prescriptions for the two barrens areas proposed in the master plan would have the effect of influencing the community composition of the two sites. The use of fire as a management technique in the barrens areas is a necessity. Fire is the tool that will be used to establish and maintain the barrens type. Once the typical barrens species composition is achieved, occasional burning every seven to ten years would be required to perpetuate the type.

Lakes
Anticipated impacts on Huber Lake and Woods Lake would be beneficial. The agents of this beneficence are natural shoreline management and the buffer zones established on the perimeters. Development of day use areas would be done so as to prevent negative impacts, primarily by limiting tree cutting and keeping structural development out of the buffer zone except where prescribed in the master plan.

The unique wild rice beds located on Woods Lake would be protected from disturbance by Native Community Management designation. Laws restricting the harvest of wild rice also provide some protection. The overall effect would be one of preservation.

Springs and Spring Runs
State Park ownership and management would have the effect of safeguarding the water quality and biological diversity of the water systems associated with the park. Some additional land acquisition to increase the scope of control over these systems is proposed in the master plan. Land management classifications have been chosen for these areas that would have the effect of preventing degradation of these resources by development or conflicting use.

Exotic Plants
A program of regular monitoring and inspection for other invasive exotic species should also be implemented. Both aquatic and terrestrial species are included. Some common invasive exotics that would be monitored are purple loosestrife, garlic mustard, spotted knapweed, tatarian honeysuckle, buckthorn, black locust, Eurasian water millfoil, etc. Department policies in place that address these threats to the resource base will be followed. Control measures appropriate to the species of invasive would be used. These may include manual harvesting, plowing, use of herbicides or poisonous agents, fire,

natural predators and magnetic pulses. The effect would be a purifying of the biotic community and a protection from future invasions.

Impacts on Endangered or Threatened Species

At this time, no state or federally listed endangered species are recorded for Governor Thompson State Park. However, as a result of this plan, federal and state endangered, threatened, or special-concern species will receive long-term protection and enhancement through the property's management. An investigation of Natural Heritage Inventory (NHI) record indicates that one state-listed “special concern “ species of vascular plant, Malaxis brachypoda (White Adder’s Mouth, a small orchid) and one species of “special concern” insect, Nasiaeschna pentacantha (Cyrano Darner, a dragonfly), have been observed on or near, the specific property. No other species of listed plant or animal were indicated in the records. Others may exist in the vicinity, however. Bald eagles and osprey are commonly observed nesting and soaring over the waters of the Peshtigo River, however none are directly associated with the state park property.

Impacts on Historical and Archaeologic Features

Available records show no archaeological sites have been documented within the Governor Thompson State Park property. This does not preclude the possibility of future discoveries, however. One of the twenty two structures on the property, a 100 foot former DNR Fire Tower, obtained by the property owners as surplus, is over 50 years old. The master plan proposes to preserve this structure through adaptive reuse as an interpretive device.

Economic Effects and Their Significance

Acquisition of land for Governor Thompson State Park is anticipated to result in an increase in property tax revenues to local governments. The Department began paying local government aids-in-lieu-of-taxes of $51,600 per year on the two properties first acquired for the park. Under a statute enacted on January 1, 1992, each time a new property is acquired, the purchase price is set as an equivalent of an assessment, and aids-in-lieu-of-taxes are paid on that basis. Therefore, one of the impacts of acquisition of additional land for Governor Thompson State Park would be an increase in these payments. Because the purchase price is often higher than the equalized assessed value of the property, the DNR’s payment is often greater. As additional properties are acquired for Governor Thompson State Park the effect would continue.

Increase in tourist numbers will increase utilization of local business establishments. Economic benefits are anticipated to result from the influx of visitors to Governor Thompson State Park. Recent data indicates that in the Northeast Region of Wisconsin local resident park visitors contribute an average of $19.12 per day to the economy, while non-local park visitors contribute an average of $57.46 per day. Anticipated annual visitation to Governor Thompson State Park when fully developed would be from 200,000 to 250,000 per year with a resulting economic impact of approximately $6.5 million a year.

Benefits during construction of the park and its components would accrue to building trade members and laborers, and suppliers, some of which may be local. Competitive bidding procedures will be followed. Total development cost for the park is expected to amount to several million dollars at completion, although the actual work may be spread over a considerable span of time. No estimate of dollar amounts to the local area is available, as extent of local contractor involvement is not yet known.

Employees working at Governor Thompson State Park would probably live in the vicinity of the park. Those employees would participate in the local economy and expend a significant amount on their daily needs as members of the community.

Fiscal Effects

Lands purchased for addition to the park would likely be acquired using State Stewardship funds or a similar bonding fund. Similarly, bonding programs fund the development of much of Wisconsin's State Park System. The cost to the state of bonding for land acquisition and project development occurs when the interest or dividends must be paid on the bonds. Several methods of making these payments could be used, the main one being General Fund Support. Conversely, a benefit would accrue to the holders of the same bonds.

The Wisconsin State Park program budgets for its capital development needs on a biennial basis, as do all state agencies. Because of the significant cost of developing Governor Thompson State Park, funding priorities within the capital budget would necessarily be adjusted to accommodate building the park. Without an increase in capital spending authority, construction of Governor Thompson State Park could cause temporary delay or deferral of implementation other state park projects.

Recurring expenses for park operation and staffing would be an unavoidable effect of park operation. . It is anticipated that if full development were already achieved, including about 100 family style campsites, the annual operating budget would be in the range of $95,000 to $150,000. This compares with similar sized properties with similar sized campgrounds in the DNR's Northeast Region. Specifically, Hartman Creek State Park, High Cliff State Park, Potawatomi State Park and Point Beach State Forest were considered in this comparison.

Estimated Costs of Development

Note: Costs for development of Governor Thompson State Park are based on 2004 dollar-values and assume full completion of all proposed construction. In actuality, work may be phased over several state capital biennial budget cycles to avoid a disproportionate load on the capital budget in any one biennium.

Park Roads and Parking Lots	$628,800
Trail Systems	$41,800
Park Entrance Visitor Station	$566,100
Shop/Storage Building	$626,100

Woods Lake Day Use Area	$336,900
Huber Lake Day Use Area	$161,650
Campground, 100-Unit Class 'A'	$1,044,100
Roads and Campsites	$256,500
Shelter Building	$26,000
Toilet/Shower Building (1)	$342,800
Vault Toilets, (6 sets 2x2)	$189,900
Utilities, well, septic, elec.	$168,400
Firewood Shelter	$5,500
Gates, signs, picnic tables, fire rings	$55,000
Outdoor Group Camp	$188,600
Access & Parking	$33,400
Campsites 30 (5 sites 6 pads) @ $750 ea	$22,500
Well and Hand Pump	$14,700
Vault Toilets (3)	$95,100
Picnic Shelter	$22,900
Indoor Group Camp	$262,700
Access & Parking	$33,400
Bunk Houses (2) @ 800sf ea.	$160,000
Well and Hand Pump	$14,700
Vault Toilets	$31,700
Picnic Shelter	$22,900
Hike-in Campsites	$13,200
Handicap Cabin (Full Service)	$150,000
Travel Trailer Sanitary Station	$101,300
Nature Interpretive Center	$150,000
Amphitheater, covered	$125,000
Playground Equipment	$52,000
Bicycle Campground 1 acre	$9500
Observation Tower	$165,000
Adaptation of Historic Firetower	$55,000
Boat Landing Upgrade	$125,000
Fish Cleaning Station	$50,000
Trail System PRSF Connector	$50,000
TOTAL COST	**$4,902,750**

Estimated Costs of Land Acquisition

DNR policy is to purchase land only from willing sellers. The purchase price is set by an appraisal prepared in compliance with state and national guidelines, unless the seller chooses to make a gift or partial donation of land.

The master plan recommends that about 1,520 acres of additional land be acquired for addition to Governor Thompson State Park. The approximately 1,520 acres of land that would be added to the park boundary would be valued at an average of $3.04 Million - if acquired all at once, using present day values. Individual parcel values would vary depending on whether any improvements or buildings existed on the site as well as the individual qualities of the site. It is unlikely that all tracts within the proposed boundary would be available for acquisition simultaneously, so expenditures would be spread over a considerable span of time, perhaps many years.

Boundary Expansion & Acquisition Impacts

Increase park size
Boundary expansion would increase the size of the park by 1,520 acres to about 3,935 acres. State funds would be expended to purchase these additional lands unless donations or partial donations of land occur.

Protect resources
It is anticipated that the acquisition of the recommended additional lands would provide protection of surface water systems feeding Woods Lake, Spring Creek, Huber Lake and Handsaw Creek. Additionally, eventual acquisition of the remaining shoreline of Huber Lake and Woods Lake would provide added resource protection by internal controls. It would also provide the park with full control to enforce the no-motors rule on these two lakes.

Change boundary configuration
The configuration of the property boundary would be impacted. It would eventually be modified to coincide with Parkway Road on the east, Ranch Road on the south and Caldron Falls Road on the west of the park. This is a generally desirable configuration that would be easily understood by the public.

Payment to landowners
Payment to landowners for land acquired by DNR may provide a profit to the seller. Or, it may enable sellers to invest in other real estate in the region, thus creating an economic benefit in the real estate market.

Undeveloped properties would be kept in an undeveloped state. Existing improvements on other properties acquired would be auctioned or sold for reuse elsewhere or salvaged for materials. Slightly fewer residences and cottages would exist within the project area,

thus a reduction in demand for public services such as police and fire protection occur. If the former owners relocate or build within the same municipal jurisdiction the net effect would be zero.

On lands purchased by the DNR since January 1992, the "property value base," used to calculate payment in-lieu of taxes (PILT), must be equal to or greater than estimated fair market value on a parcel for the year of purchase (s.s. 70.114). The purchase price is determined by an appraisal, which is completed by a certified general private or DNR staff appraiser. The year after the initial PILT payment year, and in all future tax years in which the DNR owns the parcel, its "property value base" is adjusted based on the change in land values in the municipality where the property is located. If the value in the municipality goes up 10%, the value of DNR land is adjusted upward 10%. For example, if the DNR purchased 1,000 acres located in a the Town of Stevenson in January 1992 for $1,000/acre, the DNR would assume the normal tax bill for tax year 1992, and then, in 1993, the 1,000 acres would be listed as tax exempt status and receive a PILT. If the 1993 assessment level on land in the Town of Stevenson increased and land was now at $1,500/acre, an increase of 50% (or 1.5 multiplied times the original "property value base"), the Department would adjust its "property value base" and make the PILT payments based on that figure to the taxing jurisdictions in the Town of Stevenson—thus realizing the same assessment level adjustment as that of other private landowners in the town. Likewise, if the assessment in the Township went up in the following year, the Department would adjust the PILT payment accordingly.

Increase in tax revenues to local government in Marinette County
Acquisition of additional land would probably increase the amount of aids-in-lieu-of-taxes paid to local governments. See discussion above, describing Economic Effects.

Significance of Cumulative Effects
The cumulative effects from the preferred alternatives for Governor Thompson State Park would have a long-term positive effect on the quality of the human environment. In particular the public has recognized the need to preserve land and water based public land for future generations to benefit from. They have demonstrated this support verbally and in writing. The boundary expansion recommended by the master plan would further create opportunities for improved vegetation management and surface water system and wetland protection.

While repetition of this overall action – constructing a new state park in a region where none has ever existed – is unlikely to occur, it should be noted that the state is also acquiring lands from Wisconsin Public Service Corporation on the Peshtigo River. Approximately 9,200 acres of land, largely forested, is involved. While vegetative management will likely be a major component of the Peshtigo River State Forest, there will also be recreational components.

The acquisition and management of public land on the region is not unique. Other major public holdings exist nearby including approximately 250,000 acres of Marinette County Forest, and about 661,000 acres of Nicolet National Forest.

Significance of Risk

Management and development of Governor Thompson State Park pose a low overall potential for risk to the environment. A land area development maximum of 15% has been made a part of the management prescription for the park. Current plan recommendations, even when fully implemented fall far short of the maximum.
The presence of motor vehicles and other equipment during the construction phase may pose an increased risk from spills and erosion. These risks would be mitigated by plans and procedures put in place in the bid documents and at the preconstruction meeting with contractors.

Risk to the resources of the site resulting from human activity during normal operation of Governor Thompson State Park is mitigated by emergency action plans put in place by park management staff. These plans are reviewed annually and updated as needed or when circumstances change.

Risk of introduction of invasive exotic species may increase due to public entry and use of the property. Plans and strategies, as described in the master plan Park Operation section, are in place to prevent and control outbreaks and infestations.

Fire has been identified as a possible vegetative management tool, especially for the barrens restoration sites recommended by the master plan. Necessary precautions are always followed during prescribed burns, including having fire-fighting equipment and personnel present on site. During periods of high fire danger restrictions are put onto effect. During exceptionally dry weather a complete fire ban may be implemented. The Town of Stephenson Fire Department provides fire protection at a distance of about four miles. Additional protection during high fire danger periods is available from a DNR fire control unit stationed in the vicinity.

Significance of Precedent

Approval of this management plan would not significantly influence future decisions on other Department property master plans. One development issue that is contingent upon the master planning of the Peshtigo River State Forest is that of providing opportunities for horseback riding at Governor Thompson State Park. Because the adjacent state forest contains a number of public roads that are by law now open to horseback use, and potential for miles of additional designated horse trails exists, the development of such trails at Governor Thompson State Park is being deliberately delayed. This decision is intended to provide the optimum trail system for horseback riding and camping in the future.

Significance of Controversy over Environmental Effects

Boundary Expansion from Original, Property Taxes
To date no strong opinion either for or against boundary expansion has been registered. This does not guarantee that some opposition to the idea might come up. One facet of opposition to expansion could be the perception that state acquisition of more land would erode the property tax base, causing property taxes to increase for other property owners. An explanation of DNR land buying procedures and aids-in-lieu-of-tax payments can dispel this misunderstanding.

Disagreement over recreational style, uses allowed or not allowed
Some individuals have advocated extreme primitive management and others have advocated for mechanized recreation modes. The Vision Statement and Goals suggest the preferred alternative management measures for the property. The horse riding community has strongly advocated for the establishment of horse trails in the park. DNR acknowledges this as a legitimate use of the park, but has delayed the establishment of these trails to allow a better coordination of planning with the adjacent Peshtigo River State Forest. The forest does have a number of public roads, which are legally open to horseback riding. This fact provides immediate opportunities for horse use in Marinette County while decisions are being made about establishing more horse trails.

Local officials have raised the issue of traffic impact on local roads. This refers primarily to physical impacts anticipated to the road surface of Township and County highways. It also involves concern over added congestion during the tourist season. Average daily traffic counts will increase slowly as the park development and public use

Conclusions
Implementation of master plan recommendations for management and development of Governor Thompson State Park would provide positive recreational, ecological, social, and economic benefits to the region by maintaining a predominantly undeveloped natural property, but with facilities adequate to the recreational needs expressed in the Regional Analysis. These facilities would provide opportunities for a variety of structured and unstructured recreation activities.

The natural shoreline management and shoreline buffer zones will preserve, and restore in some cases, the “just-like-Canada” look and feel of Caldron Falls Reservoir, Huber Lake, and Woods Lake.

CHAPTER FIVE: Alternatives and their Environmental Impacts

A master plan alternative is a grouping of a number of compatible options for resource management, recreational development, and public use of a Department property. The content of an alternative should be compatible with the property designation, the draft vision and goals, the property capabilities, and the regional analysis. The alternatives summarized below are the most recent set of alternative that were considered as part of the planning effort.

Recreation Management Alternatives

Alternative One
Do not re-route any snowmobile trail through the park
This alternative would not make any accommodation for rerouting a snowmobile trail of a public road. The impact would be the status quo of continued operation of snowmobiles on a less-than-optimum trail.

Alternative Two
Route snowmobile trail aligned with southern park boundary where it abuts Ranch Road
The proposal would have routed a trail on the far edge of the state park property. No trail would be routed through the park. This alternative solution would only remove a short segment of trail from the Ranch Road right-of-way. The impact to the park would be minimal, but it was decided that this alternative would not provide enough effective relief for the situation.

Alternative Three
Locate modern campground in section 16 on hill.
This alternative would provide a location for the proposed 100-unit modern campground. A significant amount of earth moving and site grading would have been necessary to achieve development of the campground and its associated facilities. During planning an additional parcel of land was acquired which provided a much better overall aspect as well as a more convenient location for other park functions.

Alternative Four
Develop extensive horse trails and camping facilities in Governor Thompson State Park.
This alternative and the topic of horse use in the new State Park have been involved in virtually every public discussion of the master plan. It was also the topic of numerous planning team and internal administrative discussions. It is well-documented that numerous requests for horse trails and horse camping were received during master planning.

This alternative would have attempted to create a horse trail in the park that would provide horse riders with a satisfactory riding experience worth driving a couple hours

both ways and spending the day in the area. Four or five miles of trail could probably be built in the park, but with difficulty because of limitations of size and barriers in the form of extensive wetlands and sandy soils on steep slopes. Four or five miles of trail would not provide a ride of much duration, unfortunately. Development of a horse & rider camp would pose less of a challenge.

Several factors have caused this alternative to be considered, but not chosen. During the master planning for Governor Thompson State Park it became known that a large amount of adjacent land with water frontage on the Peshtigo River and its hydropower reservoirs was to be acquired by the State of Wisconsin. This involved about 9,200 acres of land that has a linear character because of its relationship to the river. The land was acquired by the DNR with the designation "Peshtigo River State Forest." Wisconsin State law permits horseback riding on roads within state forest boundaries, therefore, a large amount of horse riding opportunity was very quickly created. This opportunity is open to public use now, even thought the master plan for the State Forest has not been completed.

Both the State Parks Bureau and the Division of Forestry recognize the need and intend to provide the best possible system of horse trails and camping. It is obvious that the Peshtigo River State Forest would be in a position to provide a much more comprehensive horse trail system because of its size and linear quality. A combination of existing roads and new horse trails could be the result of the forest master plan. It is also likely that the State Park could provide some needed support to this system, especially in the camping aspect, and perhaps with some connector or short special-purpose horse trails.

The desired objective is to provide the public with the best possible facility for horse riding and camping. The design of the system will not be known until both master plans are done and approved. However, horse riding opportunities are, and will be available immediately in the Peshtigo River State Forest.

The anticipated impacts of developing the facilities at Governor Thompson State Park immediately are that the optimum system may not be developed in coordination and connection with Peshtigo River State Forest. And it may prove difficult and expensive to make changes necessary to make connections between the two systems.

Alternative Five

Do not provide any opportunities for horse use in Governor Thompson State Park

This alternative is included as the "do nothing" alternative. It is a counterpoint to alternative four. There has been little or no support for this alternative. The impact of this alternative would be a loss of horse riding opportunity at Governor Thompson State Park and a loss of potential for meaningful recreational connection to the Peshtigo River State Forest. A social impact would be that the many participants in the master planning process that have worked for the good of the state park would become disenfranchised and probably cease to support the project.

Hunting Alternatives

Alternative One
No hunting allowed
In general, hunting is not allowed in state parks by regulation. It was recognized during early planning stages that the size of the deer herd within the park boundary was above the over-winter goal for the deer management unit in which the park is located, Unit 49-A. Signs of overbrowsing were evident to DNR wildlife biologists. The impact of a ban on deer hunting in the park would be an eventual elimination of understory plants, especially young red maple and white pine, and possibly permanent damage to the forest cover of the park.

Alternative Two
Manage deer hunt as a "special" hunt instead of regular deer-gun season
This alternative would establish special deer hunting seasons and zones to harvest deer and thereby reduce the size of the deer herd within the park. The impact of this type of hunt could be to achieve a deer herd reduction. However, the same effect could be realized without the large amount of administrative time and delay in establishing and running such hunts. Since the object is to reduce the number of deer in the park, the most efficient and cost-effective method is the regular deer-gun hunting season. The park's deer-gun season would be managed the same as the rest of Unit 49-A.

Alternative Three
Allow other types of small game hunting in the park
This alternative would allow hunting for species (such as turkey) other than deer in the State Park. The potential impact of this is unknown at this time, although safety and user conflict issues may be a concern. Generally, other types of hunting are prohibited in the park by statute. However a pilot program is being implemented in other parks in Wisconsin to test the concept. While this alternative could not be chosen for Governor Thompson State Park now, it may be reconsidered in the future, depending on the results in the trial program.

Vegetation Management Alternatives

Alternative One
No cutting management except for safety
This alternative means that with the exception of clearing for development needs or for removal of hazardous trees from designated use areas or trails, that no tree harvesting would be done. This is sometimes termed to be "preserving what is there now." The impact of this alternative would actually be a slow natural succession of tree species with an eventual transition to climax forest. In some cases and in some stands this could take many generations. In addition, a no management alternative may increase the impact of forest agents such as Gypsy Moth and Forest Tent Caterpillar due to the decreased health and vigor of the existing trees

Alternative Two
More active forest management
This alternative would make forestry prescriptions to actively manage more stands of timber on the property than the master plan recommends. Objectives would include converting oak stands throughout the park to other species, instead of the few areas recommended by the master plan. The impact of this alternative could be a change in visual appearance. Various silvicultural practices including clearcutting would be used. Impacts could include reestablishment of logging roads on the property, clearing and use of landing sites, significantly more logging activity and logging truck traffic in the park and on local roads. Evidence of timber harvesting could include the presence of slash on the ground, even though it may be reduced in height, and visible changes in the tree canopy. Long term impacts could also be a better distribution and location of oak stands in the park.

A general decrease in aspen acreage would also be a part of this alternative, instead of the few acres of aspen conversion proposed in the master plan. The long term effect of this alternative could also be an increase in red oak, red maple balsam fir and white pine. Techniques and tools used to implement this alternative would include herbicides, insecticides, thinning, planting and clear cutting.

Alternative Three
Restore forest to Findlay's model or other "original" model
This alternative was proposed, but not favored, in a master plan opinion survey during public meetings. It would attempt to return the forest resources of the site to a model of climax forest that existing 150 to 200 years ago. The Findlay model shows two generalized plant community types to have existed over the site. They are the Swamp Conifer group of Cedar, Spruce, Tamarack and Hemlock; and the Jack Pine, Scrub Oak, Barrens, Oak Forest type.

The feasibility and advisability of this alternative are questionable given ordinary means, and may not be desirable for park purposes. A large amount of silvicultural manipulation and many years would be required to achieve this effect. Selective cutting, clear cutting, thinning, herbicide application, scarifying, planting, and fire would all be used. In the mean time many perfectly good trees would be cut or removed because they didn't exactly fit the model for pre-settlement vegetation. The short term impact would be widespread sensory disruption while the long term impact would be a drastic change in forest cover. Further, all of the trees in these types now exist in good numbers on the property, but not necessarily in the same locations as shown on the Findlay map.

Real Estate and Boundary Alternatives

Alternative One
No additional land acquisition
This alternative would allow no land acquisition beyond what is already owned and designated as Governor Thompson State Park. The impact of this alternative would be a cessation of land acquisition. Lands recommended in the master plan for acquisition would not be acquired. This would have the secondary impact of preventing any extra measure of protection of the water resources of the site. A further impact would be the inability to enforce the "no motors" prescription recommended in the master plan.

Alternative Two
Acquire more land as per Core Team submittal
This alternative included boundary expansion as shown in the master plan, plus an additional three hundred acres located on Parkway Road and Boat Landing #13 Road. The master plan Core Team recommended that the 300 acres be deleted from the proposal as unnecessary. The impact of including this extra land would have been the extra protection of a large non-system connected wetland and significantly higher acquisition cost to the state.

Alternative Three
Do not redesignate any PRSF land on both sides of Boat Landing #13 for park use
This alternative would leave adjacent Peshtigo River State Forest land to the east and west of Boat Landing #13 under State Forest control. Some confusion could potentially occur during hunting seasons because of the proximity of a narrow strip of state forest land west of the park boundary. The public has an expectation that deer hunting and small game hunting are permitted on state forests. The impact of this action would be to allow no creation of state park walk-in campsites along the Caldron Falls shoreline. Cooperative management of this area might still allow opportunity for such development, however.

Other Management Alternatives Considered

Alternative One
Operate the former resort cabins as a public lodging facility.
This alternative was suggested by a number of persons during the early phases of master planning. Many of the former clients of Paust's Woods Lake Resort wrote letters encouraging the Department to offer the cabins for rent to the public. However, the DNR is prohibited from such activity by Administrative Code. NR 1.30(2) states "*No overnight lodging facilities other than designated campgrounds, group camps and staff residences may be constructed in state parks, except:* (2a) *Those constructed for use exclusively by people with physical disabilities, with their family or attendant or both, and* (2b) *Overnight lodging in the Seth Peterson cottage at Mirror Lake state park."*

Because this alternative is prohibited by Code no assessment of potential impacts is attempted.

Alternative Two
Locate Park entrance on Boat Landing # 13 Road
This alternative would have created the entrance to the park utilizing Boat Landing #13 Road. This idea was tested at public meetings and in correspondence with the public. There was strong negative public opinion expressed against this idea. Reasons cited included poor road bed quality and poor road routing from the main public thoroughfare, Parkway Road. The impact of selecting this alternative could be the creation of a sub-standard and difficult park entrance.

Alternative Three
Enter the park from Caldron Falls Road
Access to the park would be from Caldron Falls Road, at the extreme western edge of the park. The majority of traffic approaching the park is anticipated to arrive from the Crivitz area because of the proximity of US 141, the main north-south traffic artery in the region. This alternative was considered briefly and discarded because of the anticipated impacts of difficult accessibility and creation of a potentially dangerous intersection.

Compliance with the Wisconsin Environmental Policy Act

Project Name: Governor Thompson State Park County: Marinette

DECISION (This decision is not final until certified by the appropriate authority)

In accordance with s. 1.11, Stats., and Ch. NR 150, Adm. Code, the Department is authorized and required to determine whether it has complied with s.1.11, Stats., and Ch. NR 150, Wis. Adm. Code.

Complete either A or B below:

A.EIS Process Not Required ☒

The attached analysis of the expected impacts of this proposal is of sufficient scope and detail to conclude that this is not a major action which would significantly affect the quality of the human environment. In my opinion, therefore, an environmental impact statement is not required prior to final action by the Department.

B.Major Action Requiring the Full EIS Process ☐

The proposal is of such magnitude and complexity with such considerable and important impacts on the quality of the human environment that it constitutes a major action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment.

Signature of Evaluator	Date Signed

Number of responses to news release or other notice:

Certified to be in compliance with WEPA	
Environmental Analysis and Liaison Program Staff	Date Signed

NOTICE OF APPEAL RIGHTS

If you believe that you have a right to challenge this decision, you should know that Wisconsin statutes establish time periods within which requests to review Department decisions must be filed.

For judicial review of a decision pursuant to sections 227.52 and 227.53, Stats., you have 30 days after the decision is mailed, or otherwise served by the Department, to file your petition with the appropriate circuit court and serve the petition on the Department. Such a petition for judicial review shall name the Department of Natural Resources as the respondent.

This notice is provided pursuant to section 227.48(2), Stats

CHAPTER SIX: Summary of Public Involvement

Prior to the beginning of the Governor Thompson State Park master planning process, the Department drafted a citizen involvement plan for the planning process. When the start of the planning process was announced copies of the citizen involvement plan were provided to the public and comments were solicited.

In an effort to involve all parties affected by or interested in the future of the Governor Thompson State Park, the Department incorporated a variety of public involvement techniques. Throughout the master planning process, the Department used direct mailings, workshops, issue forums, and news releases to keep people informed and involved. All meeting announcements and information materials were sent to the Governor Thompson State Park mailing list, which currently totals over 1,400 individuals.

Chronology of Public Involvement Activities

The following is a listing of public involvement activities the Department master planning team members conducted or attended during the master planning process that was begun in August, 2001. Public meetings listed here were all announced in advance by a press release sent to local and statewide newspapers. Press releases were also distributed at key points in the planning process. In addition, there has been good press coverage by the local newspapers of events and issues throughout the planning process. An expanded mailing list was established following the initial public open house meeting. Each public open house or informational meeting was also announced through mailings to landowners and other interested citizens.

Mailings were also conducted early in the planning process to receive public input on the actual public involvement plan and the goals and objectives for the project.

August 2001. A special briefing was conducted at the Wausaukee Ranger Station for members of the State Tourism Committee.
November 2001. Invitations mailed to local government officials and initial public participation database members, announcing the first public master plan meetings.
November 2001. Produced and distributed the first edition of the trifold master planning brochure.
December 2001. Public meetings began the week of December 5, 2001. Three evening meetings were held.
March 2002. Postcards were mailed to all participants of record explaining the decision to create the initial stages of master plans for both the Peshtigo River State Forest and Governor Thompson State Park concurrently.

March 2002. Gave a master planning presentation by request, to members of an equestrian club in Green Bay. Interest in horseback riding and horse camping has been strong since the initiation of the master plan.
May 2002. Published the first edition of the Master Planning News.
June 2002. Gave master planning presentation by request, to a New London area equestrian group. Strong interest in riding horses and horse camping in Governor Thompson State Park was expressed.
August 2002. Public Meetings held (Crivitz and Green Bay) to discuss Vision Statement and Goals for Governor Thompson State Park and Peshtigo River State Forest.
October 2002. Published Newsletter covering planning on Peshtigo River State Forest and Governor Thompson State Park. Concept of "Visioning" introduced.
November 2002. Newsletter published containing suggested draft vision and goal statements for both Peshtigo River State Forest and Governor Thompson State Park.
January 2003. Met with Basin Partners to discuss and compare their views of the proposed management alternatives with views expressed by the DNR Core Team and Guidance Team.
February 2003. Newsletter published giving results of the vision and goals exercise.
February 2003. Master planning presentation, by request, to Green Bay Chapter of Audubon Society.
April 2003. Public Notice of meeting to discuss Management Alternatives for the master plan. Planning for Governor Thompson State Park advances independently of Peshtigo River State Forest.
April 2003. Newsletter announces the April public meetings and describing the management alternatives that would be discussed at the public meetings.
April 2003. Public meetings (Crivitz and Green Bay) to discuss proposed management alternatives for Governor Thompson State Park.
May 2003. Met with Basin Partners to discuss the status and content of the preferred management alternatives.
May 2003. Met with Marinette County Tourism Alliance. Presented a master planning update and discussed status and content of the preferred management alternative.
May 2003. Presented a master planning update to the Marinette County Board of Supervisors, concentrating on the status and content of the preferred management alternatives.
June 2003. Newsletter published reporting on the results of the April public meeting results and presenting the subsequent Revised Preferred Management Alternative information.
February 2004. Progress report on status if the Master Plan mailed to over 1300 recipients.
February 2004. Master Planning update presentation given to Marinette County Tourism Alliance.
March 2004. Master Planning update presentation given to Marinette County Board of Supervisors.

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Definitions and Abbreviations

DEFINITIONS:

Biological diversity. The variety and abundance of species, their genetic composition, and the communities, ecosystems, and landscapes in which they occur. It also refers to the variety of ecological structures, functions and processes at any of these levels.

Board. The Natural Resources Board.

Campground, Modern (NR 44.07(7)(e)5b). These may be comprised of a single campground or a large campground complex, and typically have 75 or more campsites. The separation distance between campsites may vary, although 100 feet shall be used as a guideline. The facility development options are not limited; however, the following facilities usually are provided: electric hook-ups for recreational vehicles, hand pump or pressurized water supply, vault or flush toilets, a recreational vehicle dumping station on-site or nearby, asphalt roadways, open play areas, paved paths and trails, lighting on buildings and public telephones. Examples of other facilities that may be present include playground equipment, full-service concessions, showers and laundry facilities.

Community. An assemblage of species living together in a particular area, time and habitat.

Cultural resources. Any archeological, architectural or historical artifact, site or structure that reflects on the human-made environment.

Department or DNR. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

Ecological capability. The potential of an area to support or develop one or more communities, with the potential being dependent on the area's flora and fauna, its non-biotic attributes, its ecological processes and disturbances within and upon the area.

Facility development. The construction of infrastructure, including buildings, roads and trails for resource management, public use or other purposes.

Group campsite. Any campsite authorized for use by groups other than those meeting the definition of a camping party in a family campground as defined by ch. NR 45.

Master plan or plan. A Department plan which describes the authorized land management, resource protection, facility development and management of recreational use on a department property, but does not include a study prepared for the purpose of considering the feasibility of land acquisition respecting a new or existing project.

Native. Indigenous to the area or region.

Native Surface Material. Unprocessed indigenous road and trail surfacing material.

Natural Succession. The predictable tendency of certain longer-lived tree species to replace shorter-lived ones over a period of time, if left undisturbed.

Natural-appearing. That which is visually perceived as minimally altered by human actions.

Slow-No-Wake Zone. A designated area of a water body where operation of watercraft must no result in a visible wake reaching the shore. This is intended to protect shorelines from wave-induced erosion; and to protect other water users from undue disturbance.

Passive management. Management where objectives are achieved without direct action.

Property or properties. Areas of land approved for acquisition by the governor under sec.23.14, State Stats., or otherwise established by the board.

Single Unit Campsite. A campsite designated for use by families or groups of 6 persons or less.

Trail. A way or path designated on department maps or by signs or both as open for public travel by foot, horseback, bicycle, snowmobile, ATV or highway/off-highway vehicles.

Trail, Fully Developed. Shall be a trail with a smoothly graded base and a stable, hard surface composed of materials such as asphalt, aggregate or frozen earth. The trail's cleared width, tread width and cuts and fills are not limited, but shall be appropriate for the trail's intended use. To the degree practicable and feasible, fully developed pedestrian trails shall be fully accessible by persons with physical disabilities.

Trail, Lightly Developed. Shall be a trail with a maximum sustained, cleared width normally not exceeding 16 feet, a moderately wide tread width for the designated uses, a rough-graded base to remove stumps and large rocks, and a surface of primitive or native materials, except where other materials are required due to environmental conditions or where the trail also serves as a lightly developed road where other types of surfacing materials are used.

Trail, Moderately Developed. Shall be a trail with a maximum sustained, cleared width normally not exceeding 8 feet, a minimal tread width for the intended use, a relatively smooth graded base with a compacted surface composed of stable materials such as aggregate. Where practical and feasible, a moderately developed trail shall, at a minimum, meet the standards for recreational trails accessible to persons with a disability.

Trail, Primitive. A trail that shall be minimally developed as single-file with a maximum sustained, cleared width normally not exceeding 8 feet and a minimal tread width for the intended use, with a rough, ungraded bed where large rocks, stumps and downed logs may be present. It primarily follows the natural topography, has no or few distances where environmental conditions require the use of other material. Modifications to the natural trail surface are limited to that which is minimally necessary to provide essential environmental protection.

Forbs. Non-woody flowering plants, most likely native to the region.

Invasive. Both native and exotic species (not native to WI) that have a tendency to take over a site in the absence of period fires or other natural processes that would have historically kept the plant species in check; typically the overabundance of invasive species causes a dramatic decrease in a system's diversity.

Presettlement. The time prior to a significant presence of American/European settlers.

Rare Species. Endangered, threatened, or plants and animals of special concern.

ABBREVIATIONS:

BMP's	Best Management Practices
CPP	Citizen Participation Plan
DMU	Deer Management Unit
EA	Environmental Assessment
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
FERC	Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
GLARC	Great Lakes Area Research Center
GTSP	Governor Thompson State Park
LTE	Limited Term Employee
MCF	Marinette County Forest
NHEU	National Hierarchy of Ecological Units
NHI	Natural Heritage Index
NRB	Natural Resources Board
PRSF	Peshtigo River State Forest
SHSW	State Historical Society of Wisconsin
UGBB	Upper Green Bay Basin
UWEX	University of Wisconsin Extension

WDNR	Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
WPSC, WPS	Wisconsin Public Service Corporation